NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

Washington Weighs La Follette

By Marguerite Young

Who Won in Pennsylvania?

By Bruce Minton

Collective Action Checks Hitler

An Editorial

I Like Granville Hicks

By Robert Forsythe

Parable of the Rigamajigatrician

By Harry Clave

The Case of Mary Taglieri

By Meyer Levin

Cartoons by William Gropper, Escott, Ad Reinhardt, and Others

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Tie a String Around Your Finger

TO REMIND YOU that—the NEW MASSES campaign for $20,000 to keep it afloat and fighting is still more than $3,000 shy of its goal. The exact figures are:

Week Ending	*Number of Contributors*	*Total Fund*
May 14	7,014	$16,881.09
May 21	7,085	$16,996.98

Needed: $3,003.02

That $3,000 may not seem like a great deal in comparison with what has already been raised. But it takes only a small leak to sink a boat. And we're sailing into the difficult summer months when the income of every magazine is reduced.

We didn't intend to write this appeal, but we simply *had to*. The sum of $20,000 that we set at the beginning of the drive was the absolute minimum to enable us to scrape through. Unless we raise *all of it—quickly*—we are headed for the rocks. Throughout this whole difficult period we have continued to improve NEW MASSES. Last week we published as an extra supplement the full text of the Browder-Libby Madison Square Garden debate on the question of a peace policy for the United States. That meant additional expense, but we felt we owed it to the thousands of our readers who were unable to attend this important event to acquaint them with both sides of this crucial issue. We are going to continue to improve NEW MASSES, to make it a more effective champion of progressive ideas. But you must make that possible by *ending the financial drive.*

There are still many coin cards outstanding. We ask all those who have them to fill them out *within one week* and send them in. If you have no coin card, send an individual donation. But do it *now*. Speed every cent by wire or air mail to NEW MASSES, 31 East 27th St., New York City.

WE are changing our typographical dress next week, and altering the make-up to allow greater flexibility. We hope our readers will like the new format, and expect they will let us know, whether they do or not.

Louis B. Boudin's article "The Supreme Court Confesses Error" will appear in next week's issue.

We list two bouquets among quite a few tossed our way recently. From Miriam E. Schwedel:

"The following is an excerpt from a letter just received by me from an English friend living in Perth, Western Australia: 'Do you ever see NEW MASSES? It is published from 31 East 27th St. In every issue I read something I would have been sorry to miss. I have only been receiving it for a few months, but I find I look forward to getting it. It is hard up for money, of course, an inherent difficulty in all this kind of anti-the-present-system stuff. They have the courage of lions to put their energy and their future into this kind of work, and of course I admire them for it.'"

From Robert G. Spivack:

"Maybe I am wrong, but I think NEW MASSES in the last two months has become much fresher in spirit, less stiff in its approach to social problems, and consequently has more reader appeal. What accounts for it—a new editor, greater response to the WYFIP ads, or a rest in the country? Or is it spring?"

On the other hand, we also get—occasionally—something like this:

"After reading your NEW MASSES for a month or so, I have come to the conclusion that it isn't worth the paper it is written on. The writers are terrible; the facts are nothing but lies; it is devoid of any humor; and as far as converting people to Communism, it just does the opposite, because only people without a grain of common sense could read such tripe and believe it. . . . Come down from your perch there among the dusty, gloomy, stupid Lenin and Marx and Stalin clouds, and walk among the clean, gay, smiling clouds of Christ, and you might see how the Marx teachings appear to the folks like myself, who would much rather smile than worry about all the troubles of the world. Yours truly, An American."

Ruth McKenney's article last week, "Meet the Communists!" is "marvelous handling of a difficult subject," writes William Shion. "Her lucid, interesting presentation will get more WYFIPs than a hundred manifestos." And Burrill Freedman and Alden Whitman join in a suggestion that Miss McKenney's two articles be published in a pamphlet, like Robert Forsythe's "The World Gone Mad."

Who's Who

MARGUERITE YOUNG was formerly with the Washington bureau of the Associated Press, the New York *World-Telegram,* and the Washington bureau of the *Daily Worker*. . . . Ruth McKenney was on the New York *Post*. A collection of her *New Yorker* sketches, *My Sister Eileen,* will be published by Harcourt, Brace in the near future. . . . William Rose Benét is the author of several books of verse and prose and an editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. . . . James Neugass returned recently from six months in Spain. He served on the Teruel front. . . . Norman Rosten has published in NEW MASSES and *Poetry*. He was awarded a Dramatists Guild scholarship and worked at the University of Michigan on a play based on Haymarket. . . . Bernard D. N. Grebanier is a professor of English at Brooklyn College and secretary of the New York Chapter of the League of American Writers.

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Flashbacks

DISSENTING justices of the Supreme Court could find "nothing in the federal Constitution which denies to the state the power to protect women from being exploited by over-reaching employers through the refusal of a fair wage," but on June 1, 1936 the New York minimum-wage law for women and children was declared unconstitutional by a five-to-four decision. . . . Speaking from prison, on May 29, 1920, of the Socialist Party Convention which nominated him for President, Debs said, "I regret that the convention did not see its way clear to affiliate with the Third International without qualifications." . . . Just a year ago (May 30, 1937) police opened fire on the pickets at the Republic Steel Corp. mills near Chicago. In the massacre Otis Jones fell, a bullet in his back having severed the spinal chord. Kenneth Reed bled to death from a bullet in the back. Anthony Taglieri died of a wound in the back—as did others of the seventeen martyrs of this Memorial Day strike meeting. . . . The Sacco-Vanzetti trial began May 31, 1921. . . . Walt Whitman was born May 31, 1819.

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NEW MASSES
MAY 31, 1938

Washington Weighs La Follette

By Marguerite Young

Washington.

IT will be nip and tuck between reaction and progress from now till November. This is covertly recognized as the nub of the elections by everybody here, even the party professionals who never used to have to know a popular issue from a hole in the ground.

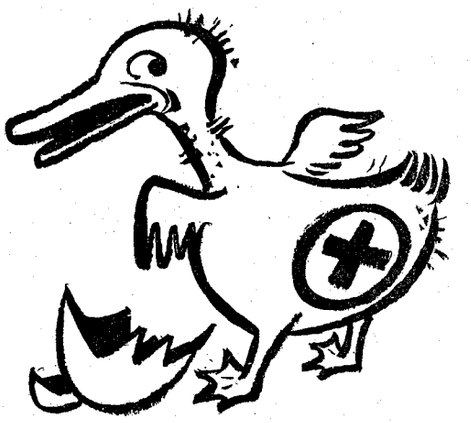
The mimeograph men at Republican National Committee headquarters are plumping for a gain of at least eighty House seats. Even should their wish come true, the party would have only 170 out of 435 representatives.

"Of course," a committee spokesman agreed. Then, brightly, "But what about the conservative Democrats? They might hold the balance of power." His emphasis made the *they* sound like *we*.

Thus refreshingly the Girdler gang's mercenary, off guard, implied their plan to carry the anti-New Deal coalition tactic into the campaigns, especially the Democratic primaries. That was the day Republican Alf Landon handed an orchid to Democrat Van Nuys, who forfeited New Deal support for reelection by joining the opposition in the Senate. That day Republican Chairman Hamilton piously chided Democratic Chairman Farley for "interfering" in the Pennsylvania primary. You can bet money the interests that supply Hamilton's sinews are putting something more substantial than verbal orchids behind conservative Democrats suffering from primary troubles.

Missing none of this, labor and liberal strategists, from Roosevelt down, confidently seek to unite their camp against Democratic as well as Republican foes, especially those now enjoying strategic positions affording special opportunities for sabotage. This marks the first serious attempt in many years to relax the grip of a little bipartisan clique of congressional-committee chairmen and ranking minority members on legislation. These places, as too few voters understand, are passed out according to seniority. That ensures immense authority to dodoes and corporation doormats returned, Congress after Congress, from districts in which popular issues were hidden.

The piquant unknown in the contest at this moment is: what influence, if any, will be exerted by Phil La Follette's third-party try? What will be attempted by this imperious young Progressive with his uncharted course and his program described by one supporter as "a strip tease"? Wondering whether the cold shoulder that the National Progressives



William Gropper

idea had been given by almost every liberal and labor publicist reflected the private reactions of practicing politicians, I went looking for a welcoming word for it. None was to be heard beyond the offices of Phil's Wisconsin Progressive congressmen—rather, some of those were in a quandary over it. Others repeatedly uttered the hope and the opinion that it would be a dud. They thought Phil soon would accept what some of his best friends have told him, that his national party could grow only if it be reaction's catspaw, and would drop it. Beside these hopes, moreover, ran some fears, especially among Middle and Far Westerners for whom the proposition has an immediate, concrete import.

I talked to Senator Norris of Nebraska, the traditional home of unorganized mass response to messiahs functioning without intermediary machinery. Norris, who was a lifelong collaborator with Old Bob, and who was often the decisive general in Progressive victories for which Old Bob got the kudos, has sat beside Young Bob daily in the Senate without being enlightened about the third-party movement. He said: "Phil was under no obligation to consult me, of course. But I cannot understand why he should launch this movement which can only split the progressive vote and give gains to Republicans. I am not so very much afraid of it in my state. I think the people will see through it. A lot of progressives have disagreed sharply with Roosevelt. But we recognize him as by far the best thing in sight at the present time."

Democratic Representative Coffee of Washington spoke sharply: "Phil's venture is opposed by the Washington Commonwealth Federation and all liberal groups. We don't like Phil's tone. We don't like his program. We don't like his timing. We don't like the whole aura of fascist portent surrounding his move. In fact, we think it has Republican support. We much prefer the suggestion that all liberals and labor get together and present our program to Roosevelt."

To Representative Byron Scott the thing looked "dangerous."

"My district's progressive forces are organized to cooperate. There's Labor's Non-Partisan League, the California Committee for Political Unity, the Workers Alliance, the Allied Democratic Clubs. That's the united front. If the La Follettes come in and try to capture Democratic nominations, as one local Progressive Party man succeeded in doing last time, it could easily mean a victory for a reactionary Democrat in August, a Republican victory in November, or both. I'm very glad the California Non-Partisan League has asked the La Follettes politely to stay out."

Those local situations which Phil might affect hold national significance. It appears when you look at the whole 1938 and 1940 picture:

Chief talking point on all sides will be the depression. Republicans will try to picture it as the handiwork of a deliberately diabolical Roosevelt. New Dealers will center on their efforts to ease its effects on the majority of the people. Things have broken decidedly Roosevelt's way, lately. Senator Pepper's Florida sweep, the CIO and LNPL's skillful Capitol Hill campaign for the wages-and-hours bill, and Bill Green's belated endorsement opened the reactionary coalition's legislative dam. Consequently, this Congress may enact several new progressive items like an amended Pepper-Coffee federal-arts bill, as well as the labor-standards and the recovery proposals. Things embodying specific, material considerations for mass protection against the depression. You have to count in, also, the National Labor Relations Board's spectacular strength against every attack in Congress and in the courts; this means safer unions, more confident mass political formations. The Pennsylvania-primary showing of a half-million labor votes, and Oregon's resounding okay on New Deal candidates are not bad signs either, nor is the administration's bestirring itself in these combats. Finally, labor in the state of Washington is setting an all-important political example. It faces a sort of ladies' auxiliary of the state chamber of commerce—they are called Women of Washington, Inc.—and an organization named Associated Farmers of Washington. Both are circulating petitions for a law

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to force unions to incorporate, cease picketing, and otherwise toe the open-shoppers' line. But labor has learned: the AF of L's official newspapers are calling for solidarity against the political menace! Both factions are working with other progressives for a state Democratic convention wherein all can agree on candidates and program; in connection with it, AF of L editors are asking officials to call their dogs off Harry Bridges.

How widely will this Washington pattern appear? That is the crucial question, for the greatest single need among the progressives is unity.

The Republicans, rolling in money and propaganda media, have chosen concentration points—126 congressional districts which they lost in 1936 by less than 10 percent of the vote. They are in normally Republican territory, where the tories figure on winning back born Republicans who wandered to the New Deal. The Democratic National Committee concedes possible slips in such territory—off-year elections usually have netted them to the administration party.

Hence the acute question: will Republican victories be offset by substitutions of progressive for reactionary Democrats—or vice versa? Will progressive Democrats in teeterboard territory run the hazard of divided supporters? Look at one of those 126 Republican concentration points—the Fourth Iowa District now represented by Fred Bierman, a progressive who supports Roosevelt domestically and opposes embargoes against sister democracies. Iowa is the one state in which a local Farmer-Labor Party has seconded Phil La Follette's national third party. It ran a candidate last time. Then, Bierman received 56,308 votes, the Republican got 51,805, and the local Farmer-Labor candidate, 3,186. That means something very pertinent: the Farmer-Labor man, now running again, just has to increase his vote from 3,500 to 4,900 to hand Bierman's chair to a Republican. That result would seem almost certain if the Farmer-Labor man got the backing of the La Follettes and the Chicago *Tribune* that covers the district like a blight. You see why Bierman declares: "If the La Follette movement has any effect at all on Iowa, it will be to divide the liberal forces. The Democratic Party today represents progress in social and economic directions. If the liberals divide between the Democratic Party and a third party, it will give the reactionaries a chance to win."

Representative Thomas Amlie of Wisconsin, a La Follette ally holding the distinction of having been consulted beforehand, told me Phil has no intention of breaking with or jeopardizing the New Deal. But Mr. Amlie also said emphatically: "Unless someone forces the issue, the Democratic Party is almost certain to go conservative in 1940. That would be less likely if there is an alternative waiting on the left. And if there is to be such an alternative proposition in 1940, we must prepare now—1940 would be too late."

The present inner-Democratic trend is just the opposite, and what happens in 1940 depends very much on the interim.

"You can argue that," Mr. Amlie conceded. "But the administration's measures have been too modest."

Though he describes himself as fundamentally in agreement on launching the national third party, Congressman Amlie is leery of certain things about it. He "would have bawled the daylights out of Phil" if he had seen the unfair definition of Socialism Phil put into the program speech when he rewrote it at the last minute. The internal paradoxes that "made it seem as if he was bidding for support from both sides" displeased Mr. Amlie, as did the now famous rant against relief. Mr. Amlie could only figure Phil somehow failed to say what he meant—though "he would be inclined to be more hard-boiled than Bob about relief."

I talked to a number of others—lifelong intimates and admirers of the La Follette tribe. They piled the laurel on Phil: he was able, he was shrewd, he had prestige and leadership which the progressive front needs. Yet an elegiac note crept in, and certain information that seems too significant to withhold, even though I cannot quote the sources and I hope they are mistaken in their inferences.

THESE PEOPLE solved the mystery of why Phil conferred with John L. Lewis shortly before the Madison meeting but kept mum about it. Phil *had* seen, before Lewis, one of Lewis' allies in labor politics. And this person, so close to Lewis that their reactions would surely be similar, had urged Phil to lay off. He had given Phil a triple warning. He had told Phil the movement would be abortive; that its only possible basis of growth now would be as an aid to reaction; and that therefore it could expect no cooperation from existing labor and farmer political organizations. The possibility of Phil's having acted in innocence dwindles. As a matter of fact, he had informed many progressive, labor, and liberal people—at least two thousand in recent months, I was told. But he had invited them in large groups, then told them they were too many to really discuss the plan, so would they kindly go home and write him a letter about it? He had taken it up with many Wisconsin Progressives, but not organizationally. It turns out that there is no full functioning body to have acted on it. I was told, "Yes, there's a state central committee, but it never does much except fill vacancies." The La Follettes once long ago tried rank-and-file stuff—and have been suspicious of it ever since, fearing their enemies would utilize it to get in bad people. I asked whether that had happened in their experiment. I was told, no—it wasn't reactionaries who got in, but "incompetents"—the Socialists' people!

All the La Follettes were ambitious, often accused of being dictatorial, determined it should be a La Follette or nobody. Friends recognized that ambition could be useful in a leader. Phil was the most ambitious of all and the subtlest. Wisconsin farmers have a saying: "Phil has the brains, but Bob has the sense of the family." Phil was bitterly cut by Old Bob's death before Phil was old enough to succeed him; running for the Senate this November against Democrat Duffy is not out of Phil's thoughts. Two Senators La Follette simultaneously—"Why not?" they told me Phil asks.

I didn't have a chance to ask many people what this young Progressive is doing with Mussolini's photo on his wall, nor the meaning of his Hitleresque nationalism, his repetition of subtly turned big-business specifics such as the anti-regulation demand for "business that does not have to run from Washington." They were all asking themselves these questions. All kept repeating that they were certain Phil had too much integrity and too nimble a mind to be a conscious or unwitting ally of reaction.

All this lends plausibility to Congressman Coffee's hint of Republican support for Phil's National Progressives. It renders less than fantastic a conjecture I heard from another responsible source—that 1940 may see the Republicans nominating Phil for President. Actually they could write their platform out of the Madison speech and have little left over.

Their program is in substance the same stale dose: let us alone, halt relief, smash the Wagner act, let the depression run its course à la Hoover. But the form may be very fancy. I got a whiff of it from the identity of one of the Republican Committee's publicity men. You would expect them to be ex-Hearst men. He was—but of a special type. He was Richard Sanger, the turncoat who won his Hearst spurs with anti-Soviet diatribes offered as the personal experience of one who had professed to be a Communist.

But that technique works only with a people demoralized by real defeats—and the progressives here count, persuasively, on advancing. They know their concentration points. For instance, Labor's Non-Partisan League people figure on licking George of Georgia, and that dean of bourbon Democrats, "Cotton Ed" Smith of South Carolina. The League is getting good reports on the race its candidate, William E. Dodd, Jr., is giving House Rules Committeeman Howard Smith in Virginia. A state affiliate sends word it has an excellent chance to put a labor man in the place of Rules Committeeman Martin Dies, Texas, the big Red-hunter. Enough of these inner Democratic shifts would improve the outlook for progressive measures, regardless of a slight numerical gain by the Republicans. After clearing out these individuals, the natural next objective for labor and progressive forces would be the seniority system itself. To replace it with the democratic process of electing congressional committees would make a fundamental improvement in Congress' responsiveness to voters' mandates. For that reason it would encounter every device of opposition big business could concoct. Everybody knows that better than the labor progressives who nevertheless have it on the top of their agenda.

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"Higher wages, suh, will destroy these people's prosperity!"

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What Every Red-Baiter Should Know

By Ruth McKenney

THE fevered brains of the New York *Post* editorial staff find the goings-on of the American Communist Party mighty, mighty mysterious, and very, very hair-raising. God knows what happens, they hint breathlessly, in that ramshackle old building down on Twelfth Street.

Mr. Hearst can't quite figure out the Communist Party either. His employees, or as they say so richly in the *Daily Worker,* his hirelings, write pieces about Mr. Browder flitting in and out of 35 East 12th St., bound, no doubt, on dark and devious journeys. The strains of music leak out from the Red bookshop in late afternoons, who knows but to cover up the sound of time bombs being wound up in the basement. Now and then the rumble of some great machine reaches the street, frightening passersby out of their collective wits. There's nary a dull moment, Mr. Hearst growls, down at the corner of University Place and Twelfth Street. In short, *Boo!*

Well, the New York *Post* and Senator McNaboe and Ham Fish and Mr. Hearst and Father Curran, the brass hats of the American Legion officialdom, and assorted other juicy Red-baiters are wrong about the mystery but right (for a change) about the dull moments. The Communist Party of America is about as mysterious as the United States government, and very nearly as intricate. On the other hand, the myriad activities of the comrades are plenty exciting.

As we shall now see. The Communist Party of America operates on almost every conceivable battle-front of this country, in trade unions, in farm organizations, in ladies' clubs, in Harlem, in the Deep South, among the intellectuals. All this busy and, I must add, effective scurrying around is efficiently centralized in an organization that looks staggeringly complex but unfolds to be fairly simple in the end. The best way to get a handle on the party is to watch it work on some specific issue. Let's take collective security and see the famed democratic centralism in action.

In the first place, the Communist Party peace program is no creature of an idle and recent moment. It goes way back before even March 1936, when Earl Browder went on the radio with his now famous slogan: "Keep America Out of War by Keeping War Out of the World."

That was a famous broadcast in more ways than one. Mr. Hearst nearly lost his mind, you will remember, fulminating about what was the country coming to, with a Communist on a coast-to-coast network? Party members were thrilled to the bone by the first appearance of the general secretary of the organization on a big-league radio hookup, and the whole country bent an ear that evening to Comrade Browder's words.

The hundreds of thousands of men and women who heard Browder that memorable evening for the first time, were surprised. They had been told so often that the Communists took "orders" from Moscow. Now an American, in the slightly nasal accents of Kansas, talked about America. And Comrade Browder made a deep impression on the people of his own country when he said, "America must join with peace forces all over the world to restrain the German, Japanese, and Italian warmakers."

Three months later, in June 1936, shaggy, big-shouldered Bob Minor told the Communist Party of America at its convention in New York, "Life has shown that the very slogans of 'isolation' and 'neutrality' and the foreign policies based upon them encourage and assist the warmakers at home and abroad, and are increasing the war dangers for America as well as for the world."

He also said, and the convention voted a loud yea on his resolution (which was written by the collective efforts of the entire central committee, of course): "America must support the peace efforts of those powers that are working for peace in Europe and the rest of the world."

COLLECTIVE SECURITY has been a principle of the American Communist Party for some years, then. Party members have been applying the slogan, "Keep America Out of War by Keeping War Out of the World," ever since Comrade Browder went on the air in March 1936. The rank and file of the party, through their duly elected delegates, approved collective security at their convention nearly two years ago and gave their leaders the okay signal on carrying the idea into practice.

So much for the background. Everybody will please note that the business of collective security was adopted by the local comrades via perfectly good democratic procedure. Everybody will please also note that, having unanimously decided that isolation was bad for America, Communists are thereby pledged to hold fast to the principle until a convention changes it. They call that discipline. You get your chance to vote no and convince others to do the same. If you get voted down after fair discussion, you're supposed to go along with the majority on the grounds that an army doesn't work so well if three soldiers and a corporal decide (at the crucial moment) to retreat, instead of attacking with the rest of the boys.

We now come around to last October. The President of the United States is making a speech at Chicago. The world situation has taken a turn for the worse since Comrade Browder and Comrade Minor had their say some months before. Hitler and Mussolini have moved in on Spain. The Japanese militarists are starting on their bloody adventure in China. Things look plenty tough.

President Roosevelt startles the nation with his slogan: "Quarantine the Aggressors."

The political bureau of the central committee of the Communist Party goes into session. I guess we should pull up to a sharp halt at this point to explain that each national convention of the party elects a group of comrades to the central committee. The boys are elected in the good old-fashioned way of highest vote gets in—only the campaigning for candidates is done not on the log-rolling or you-scratch-my-back-and-I'll-scratch-yours basis, but rather on the considerably more ethical principle of, "Which of the candidates have shown themselves the best leaders of the working class?" The delegates take the central-committee elections very seriously and the comrades of the central committee get elected not because they kiss babies elegantly, own the votes of eight dozen ward-heelers, or part their hair becomingly, but because they've proved themselves, through running big mass-movements, through handling huge strikes successfully, through theoretical articles in the *Communist,* first-class Communists.

All right. Then the central committee gets together for an organization session. Obviously the full central committee can't hang around New York every day in the year to decide the everyday problems of the party. You've got to have a smaller group that can act quickly. That's the political bureau. I don't know quite why they call it that—it might as well be called the steering committee, but it's not. Tradition is tradition, even among revolutionists, and the top leadership of the party is officially dubbed the political bureau, or, in party shorthand, the polbureau.

The central committee also elects a chairman of the party—that's the grand old man of American trade unionism, William Z. Foster. He is, naturally, on the polbureau. Earl Browder is also elected by the central committee. He's general secretary of the central committee and also of the polbureau. He shares with Foster the responsibility of making decisions and acting as the party's top leader.

Incidentally, and this is an aside to those gullible people who smell Moscow gold in the immediate environs of 35 East 12th St., some of the paid officials of the Communist Party of America draw down salaries on the following scale: single men or women, $20 per week; married comrades, $25; married comrades with one little future Lenin, $30; the same with two bouncing bambinos, $35. [illegible]ps. I say some of the comrades get this scale. Many of them don't get [illegible]f so much, unfortunately—money is [illegible]dues are low, and the party always

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needs hard cash for broadcasts and newspapers and suchlike. Traveling Communist dignitaries get day-coach railroad fare and, if they can't possibly stay with comrades in out of town spots, a hotel room in the fourth best hotel in the city. Or the fifth best.

So, as you will remember assorted paragraphs back, the gents of the polbureau are in session considering President Roosevelt's speech. I don't pretend to have been listening at any keyholes, but it's not hard to gather that boys of the polbureau are doing some modest whoopla-ing. Boy, oh boy, the President sure told those isolationists!

After the rejoicing (which lasts approximately two and a half minutes; Communists never sit around rejoicing, they are always too busy hunting up new hurdles to leap across) somebody points out that the next job is to line up the American people solidly in back of the President's policy, and incidentally, to do the job in the teeth of the fierce opposition sure to bust out immediately from all sides.

Of course, this is not exactly a small task, especially when you consider the party has 75,000 members and absolutely no dough to buy ads in the papers, pay for broadcasts, hire billboards, etc. However, the gents of the polbureau are not downcast. Instead they formulate some plans and pass the word out, "Mobilize the American people behind President Roosevelt's speech."

That was last October. I ask you fairly, is or is not collective security a household word these days? I don't say the American people are unanimously for it yet, by any means, but I do say they're certainly getting an earful of it these days, right and left.

AND HOW DID IT HAPPEN? Well, the wheels started rolling the day after the polbureau met. Item: Clarence Hathaway, editor of the *Daily Worker*, calls his staff together for a conference. The *Daily* goes to press with the full text of President Roosevelt's speech and the clarion call, "Back up the President in his plea for collective security—this is the people's platform for peace."

As the mail trucks thunder out from the basement pressroom (it's the press that makes all that mysterious noise that chills the marrow of Hearst hirelings passing by) a group of gentlemen are creaking up on the elevator to Jack Stachel's office. The elevator hesitates, poised like a dying bird, between the eighth *(Daily Worker)* and the famous ninth floor at 35 East 12th St. The comrades in the cage opine that comes the revolution the very first thing they will do is to get a brand new elevator for the party building. Everybody laughs politely at this nice, comfortable, old joke and secretly hopes the elevator will get up enough strength to take them to Stachel's office sometime today.

Which it does eventually. Mr. Stachel gets down to business as soon as the boys file into his little room, which still reeks of the dose of beige-colored paint it got in the big recent renovation job. The reason they painted the ninth floor over was because it was beginning to look like a Communist den as pictured in a Hearst cartoon.

Mr. Stachel begins talking to his visitors. They are outstanding Communists in the trade-union movement of America. Here's a short, hard-bitten little hackie, young in years but plenty old in experience; and a miner, hastily called in from the Pittsburgh party office; a pleasant-faced, nicely dressed woman from the garment trades; and a Negro longshoreman up from the docks.

The talk is mostly about what Communists call "strategy," or "tactics," which is to say, what's the practical way of making a theory work? These Communists don't need to be convinced of the menace of isolation. So they debate how to keep trade unions from endorsing the futile and dangerous Ludlow war-referendum bill.

They agree on a phrasing of the collective-security idea for mass unions. But before they leave, Comrade Stachel says, in rather an offhand way, "I don't have to remind you, comrades, that we're working against time."

Nobody answers that. But the small, tough face of the seaman darkens, and the woman bites her lip. For these are working people, and they do not look upon danger to the American working class objectively, from afar. It is their own that are threatened, their people, their friends, their sons. Communists are almost never sentimental, and among themselves they talk less about "sacrifice" than any people I ever knew. But Communists feel deeply, in their hearts, in the very marrow of their bones, about the working class—because they *are* the working class.

Jack Stachel wasn't the only one having a

Ad Reinhardt

Senator McNaboe Finally Gets a REAL Communist to Testify Before His Committee

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conference that October afternoon. The "org-secretary" (organizational secretary to you) is furiously moving the wheels of inter-party communication. He's getting in touch with district organizers in New York, in Cleveland, in Chicago, in San Francisco, in Denver, in Seattle, in Alabama. D.O.s, as they say in party circles, are elected by state committees. The state committee is to the state convention what the central committee is to the national convention—it's not really complicated, just read that over again and you'll get it. The district organizers get paid, and some of them don't eat too regularly, by dues from their district, on the same scale as national "functionaries" (read paid, fulltime employees).

Next day, Communists who speak with the drawl of Alabama, automobile workers in Detroit, steel workers in Pittsburgh, rubber workers in Akron, comrades who live on the South Side of Chicago, longshoremen from the San Francisco Embarcadero are tramping into district-committee meetings, listening to the call to rally the American people for collective security.

Now (and we're about halfway down the ever broadening pyramid) the wheels of the party are really beginning to turn, and not slowly either. The day after the district-committee meetings the section organizers are calling up the boys and saying, "Emergency section-committee meeting, nobody excused, all hands expected."

But don't imagine that these hundreds of committee meetings held all over the country are confined to dull parroting of the original resolution of the polbureau. For the D.O. in San Francisco has different problems from the D.O. in Cleveland. Through the din and clatter of a thousand voices emerge all kinds of specific plans for putting the idea of collective security across with farmers in the Northwest, steel workers in Chicago, sharecroppers in the South.

And in the meantime, the comrades in New York are leaping into the fray. The New York party, the biggest in the organization, has a set of officials: Charlie Krumbein is the state secretary, I. Amter the state organizer, and after them the New York district officials, and under them, the county and assembly-district organizers. The New York organization begins, then, to percolate under the collective-security program and, four days after the polbureau met, garment workers in an industrial-unit meeting, advertising and radio men in a radio workers' unit, motion-picture operators in a flicker industrial-unit, comrades in hundreds of neighborhood branches are sitting around in drafty halls, arguing about how to sell their friends and "contacts" on collective security.

The Harlem division, with Comrade Ford at the head, has already gone into action. A week after the polbureau met, progressive Harlem ministers were discussing collective security with representatives of the party—and unemployed Negro workers are hashing over the problems of peace on relief-bureau sitdowns.

We now have our teeth in the crust of the problem. The basic party structure is rolling along with collective security. Ten days after the polbureau raised the slogan, "Support the President's Chicago speech," every member of the Communist Party of America has been in on at least one party meeting—district committee, or state committee, or section committee, or branch, or unit—devoted almost entirely to collective security. From coast to coast and from Canada to New Mexico, as Republican orators say so largely, Communists are talking concerted action.

And it's only fair at this point to take a good look at the most fundamental thing in the party—the unit. Every member of the Communist Party belongs to a neighborhood branch, a factory or shop unit, or an industrial unit. The whole pyramid of the party rests on this broad base of thousands of eleven- or twelve-member units, or twenty- or twenty-five-member neighborhood branches.

Now when the word goes out to get behind President Roosevelt's speech, all sorts of leaders sit on national, or state, or district, or section-committee meetings to make plans about putting the idea into practice—but eventually all their plans come before the members of the party units for discussion, decision, and action. The eventually is a matter of a few days, too, not a few weeks, which is one of the reasons the party really clicks.

Units are supposed to work about the same all over the country. Of course, there's some variation—down South it takes sharecroppers half a day to drive the mule over to the comrade's house for a meeting, so units there find it pretty hard to meet once a week. But usually the unit meets regularly on whatever is the most convenient night for its membership. In New York City, all the units, except a few special ones, meet on the same night to make things easier for the section officials.

On a Wednesday night late in October, for instance, Comrade Halcon, the "organizer" of the Goodyear Plant No. 1 shop unit, calls the "bureau" together to plan the agenda for the evening's get-together. In party parlance, an "organizer" is the chairman of the unit, the liaison man between the members and the next highest party body, the section. The "bureau" is the central committee of the unit—three or four comrades who divide the work of leadership and the responsibility.

Now the reason why Comrade Halcon is the unit "organizer" is that he's a first-class tire builder, a shop steward in the union, quite some orator in his Alabama fashion, and generally the most popular member of the unit among the rank and file of the workers in the factory. The other members of the "bureau" were elected by the unit because they too are leaders in their own right among the non-party workers. This is an important point—Communists always pick for leaders the men who are trusted and liked by workers themselves. The unit is no exception to this rule.

Well, the bureau goes into a knotty session. Until this collective-security thing came along, the unit leaders had planned on a report about the local Non-Partisan League. The boys are planning a broad democratic front for the next election, with the middle class hitched up to a progressive election program backed by the unions. The report is postponed until next week and Comrade Halcon, who's on the section committee, is delegated to tell the boys about getting behind the President's speech. He's allotted thirty minutes for his speech and thirty more minutes are set aside for questions and resolutions on the subject. Rubber workers must sleep, and if you didn't have time limits certain of the more longwinded characters in the unit might talk all night about collective security. It's an interesting subject, and all Communists like to get their two cents' worth in on any and all ideas.

The bureau sets aside five minutes for literature talks, another five minutes for dues collection, and thirty minutes for shop problems. That makes an hour and forty minutes, but the bureau is not too optimistic—time limits have a way of being elastic when the subject gets hot.

Sure enough, the time limit on collective security at the unit meeting, which starts right after the boys of the bureau get through, collapses. After an hour, six comrades want to ask questions and make suggestions. The discussion lasts exactly an hour and thirty-four minutes, at the end of which time the comrades have decided to put out a leaflet tomorrow entitled "Goodyear Workers! Back Up the President's Speech! Keep America Out of War by Keeping War Out of the World!" The unit has also decided to bring a collective-security resolution up at the next meeting of the Goodyear local of the rubber union, and try to get the progressive shop steward head from Plant No. II to back it. Comrade Halcon is appointed to write the resolution.

After which Comrade Halcon calls on the literature agent to talk about this month's issue of the *Communist* which is so good nobody can afford to miss it, really comrades, we ought to buy more *Communists* every month, and the boys finally get around to considering the week's problems in the shop.

That's how collective security, then, works its way down the broad base of Communist Party structure, from the top leadership.

BUT TAKE A DEEP BREATH, dear reader. This is only the beginning. The simple up-and-down structure of the party—from unit to section to district and so on up to the polbureau—is augmented by half a dozen commissions and departments. You'll remember Comrade Stachel puffing on his pipe several pages back and talking things over with trade-union comrades. Well, even as he glowered over the Ludlow [illegible] Mother Bloor was trotting down a nearby corridor waving handfuls of paper at friends, on her way to a women's-commission meeting. Four Chinese comrades and two Finnish-American comrades passed Mother Bloor in the hall, bound for commissions of their own. In the meantime, off in the educational department, the wheels of the party are grinding slowly. The gentlemen of the educational department are engaged in following in the footsteps of Tom Paine—writing pamphlets.

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The Communist Party, as nearly everybody knows, publishes and distributes more pamphlets than any other organization in the United States. The comrades in the educational department think nothing of putting out a pamphlet on Spain and the Catholic Church, one on China and the boycott, another on relief, all on the same day. So, with collective security a red-hot issue, the educational department rises to the challenge and starts making plans for pamphlets. In a week there will be a short, snappy pamphlet selling for a penny; in two weeks, a longer, more comprehensive job, price one nickel; in six weeks the Communist Party will have half a dozen collective-security pamphlets, some appealing to young people, some designed to convince women, some debating Bruce Bliven's arguments, some giving the text of the Roosevelt speech, some addressed to farmers or union men.

Of course, pamphlets aren't, by far, the only publications the party is interested in. Besides the three English dailies and the *Morning Freiheit,* not to mention a score or more Finnish and Chinese, Hungarian and Lithuanian, Italian, Polish, Latvian, and other foreign-language publications, the party has a hand in the publication of assorted other magazines of various types and kinds. Some of the magazines the party itself publishes—the theoretical monthly, the *Communist,* the theoretical young people's monthly, *Young Communist Review,* and the *Party Organizer*. Many others the party helps edit. And many, many other magazines are edited by people friendly to the party who come around and ask for advice and direction in getting out their weekly or monthly publications.

Besides magazines, the party plays an important role in book publishing. That remarkable Yale man, Comrade Trachtenberg, sits in his office in a Fourth Avenue minor skyscraper, planning collective-security books for International Publishers. Few Communists, let alone outsiders, have any idea that International Publishers is one of the largest, bar none, of the publishing houses of America. International Publishers gets out a positively staggering number of fullsized, regularly cloth-bound books every year—books on Marxism, books on trade unions, left-wing novels, poetry. Years ago, the party discovered that no bourgeois publishing firm would print Lenin or Marx at a price workers could afford. Comrade Trachtenberg solved the problem when he started his independent firm, and the party gave the new, struggling publishing house plenty of encouragement and advice. Today International Publishers supplies the party with the books it needs to promote political understanding among its members, at a price working people can afford.

But publishing means less than nothing without distribution, which brings us around to Workers Bookshops, one of the largest bookstore chains in America. I have such a soft, sentimental feeling in my heart for Workers Bookshops that I find it hard to report just the remarkable facts about these bookshops—how they sell more magazines, pamphlets, and almost as many books as any other bookstore chain in America. I keep wanting to tell about how, when you are a stranger, and lone and lorn in a new town, Workers Bookshops give you a chance to bump into the people you want to meet, hash over politics with friends, and so on. And in New York City, one of the nicest places, just as a place, in town, is the main bookstore on Thirteenth Street where they play symphony records, and all the comrades drop in to buy pamphlets and pass the time of day.

Escott

The History of a Tory Whisker

Of course, the bookshops aren't the only distribution channel for the party publications. Every unit or branch, like Comrade Halcon's shop unit, has a "literature agent." The party believes that its members should learn, should read, should inform themselves. Few party members get away from a unit meeting without a new pamphlet in the pocket, or even a new book for the bookshelves.

Mass publishing requires more than distribution systems however—it requires an audience. The party supplies that audience by its widespread and energetic campaign for education and more education of its membership.

The Workers Schools of the American Communist Party are, in fact, one of its proudest achievements. Spread over the country, financed by the hard-earned pennies of working people, the Workers Schools teach Marxian dialectical materialism, economics, trade-union history, languages, music, strike tactics, how to write poetry, how to edit shop-papers, history, and English. Every other member of the party treks off to school twice a week, and even the most famous Communists turn up in class every year or so to teach Leninism or French history.

And besides these big schools, the party runs special training-schools for the men and women they hope to train as leaders in the organization. Negro sharecroppers, West Coast longshoremen, miners, steel workers, seamen, girls from the garment trade go off to collective schools where they study and work together, finally to return to their homes to put into immediate use their training.

WELL, THAT GIVES YOU an extremely rough picture of the Communist Party of America going into action. Nothing less than a book about the size of *Anthony Adverse* could tell you even approximately all about the functioning and structure of the party in the United States.

Yet there's something else a reporter needs to say about the Communist Party in America, to explain, even very briefly, what makes the organization click, what makes it respond time and time again to harder and harder jobs, what makes its members face death on picket lines, what makes its rank and file sit up late nights, wearily reading the latest pamphlet, plodding painfully through long articles in the *Daily Worker,* so that they will "understand."

No such phrase as "democratic centralism," no such tag as "American efficiency applied to revolutionary ideals" can really get at the heart of the matter. For card-filing systems and careful organization plans cannot make or break a revolutionary party.

The delegates to the convention this week know that the Communist Party of America faces the future with its chin up and colors flying because its members are united in the deep and passionate belief that the fight for Socialism makes men brothers everywhere.

This is the second of two articles by Miss McKenney on the Communist Party of the United States.

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William Gropper

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The Communist Convention

THE sinister conspiracies which Senator McNaboe and other professional Red-baiters have been hunting in all sorts of devious places will be on full and public view in New York for six days beginning May 26. On the evening of that day the tenth national convention of the Communist Party opens with a mass meeting in Madison Square Garden. Those who are looking for "foreign isms" and deep-dyed plots will, however, be sorely disappointed. What they will find at the Communist convention is a cross-section of America, 1938—Mr. and Mrs. Average American from the factories, the mines, the offices, the farms, the WPA projects, and the professions, meeting together to discuss what needs to be done to unite the people for action in this critical hour.

The tenth convention of the Communist Party is being held at a time when democracy in all parts of the world is being assailed from without and within. The events in Spain, China, Czechoslovakia, Brazil, and Mexico—these are the signposts of our time. The baby-killers and book-burners reach out to extinguish liberty and culture in every land. And our own Morgans, du Ponts, Girdlers, Hearsts, and their political representatives among the reactionaries in both major parties constitute the American section of this fascist international. Ours is, therefore, the problem of all humanity, the problem of organizing the majority of the people to save democracy and peace and the values which civilized men have learned to cherish.

It is this problem above all others that the Communist convention will deal with. The Communist Party speaks as an integral part of the democratic forces of America, and it speaks with a voice whose authority is growing among ever larger sections of the workers, farmers, and small-business and professional people of the country. The convention of no other political party has been organized on so democratic a basis. It has been preceded by two months of thoroughgoing discussion by the party membership. Those who have read the two articles in NEW MASSES by Ruth McKenney on the structure and methods of work of the Communist Party will know that such discussion is based on the intimate participation of the members in the struggles and mass movements of the people in all parts of the United States. The convention decisions will, therefore, be a collective product illuminated by Marxist-Leninist science and compounded of the experience and wisdom not only of the 75,000 Communists, but of all the progressive forces of the country.

The keynote of the convention has been struck by the principal draft resolution which states:

> The chief task before the working class, and therefore, above all, before the Communists, is to defeat the offensive of finance capital and block the road to fascism in the conditions of the developing economic crisis. To achieve this aim it is necessary to unify and consolidate all labor and progressive forces into one single democratic front.

That is an aim which NEW MASSES—and, we feel certain, all genuine progressives—heartily endorse.

Pennsylvania and Oregon

THERE is nothing like a formula that works both ways. When Lieut. Gov. Thomas Kennedy failed by a narrow margin to win the Democratic primary in Pennsylvania, the newspapers, almost as though their headlines were written in one central office, exulted over the complete defeat of the "CIO's attempt to enter politics." They foresaw labor turning disgustedly away from further political action. When reactionary Governor Martin of Oregon was defeated by the New Dealer Henry Hess, the same papers—that is, almost the entire American press—felt that the small margin by which Hess won was a blow to the prestige of the national administration. Perhaps the editorial in the New York *Herald Tribune* summed up this attitude most inclusively:

> The fact that Governor Martin, after provoking a snub from the President, after being semi-officially excommunicated by Secretary Ickes, and after managing to make his candidacy into the one issue anywhere in the country upon which the AF of L and the CIO have been able to sink their bitter enmities, still came so close to squeaking through may represent a victory, but to a casual observer it will seem a Pyrrhic one.

The "casualness" of the *Herald Tribune* is open to challenge. And the analysis of the Pennsylvania primaries which appears in this week's NEW MASSES points out that the joy of the press in headlining "CIO Defeat" seems hardly warranted. Moreover, the singling out of the CIO proves to be a misrepresentation.

In Oregon, with ten candidates splitting the vote, Hess' seven-thousand lead over Governor Martin was not as unimpressive as the anti-New Dealers like to make out. What was important was that labor unity defeated the man who tried to run Harry Bridges and Harry Pritchett, and their longshoremen's and lumbermen's unions, out of the state. The results of both the Pennsylvania and Oregon primaries indicate that the broad forces of the democratic front can defeat open reaction in the November elections. And no matter how much the formula-jugglers depend on their abracadabra of "Heads, reaction wins; tails, the progressives lose," the progressives in that case will gain a greater voice in political life and turn back the open reaction of the Republican Party and the Liberty League Democrats.

Hague and Harlan

THE Bill of Rights may soon catch up with Führer Hague of Jersey City. At long last the administration has acted. The Department of Justice, in response to a deluge of appeals and protests, has begun an investigation which may result in prosecution under the civil-rights statute passed in 1870. This is the same law under which sixty-four Harlan County, Ky., mine operators and deputy sheriffs are now standing trial in the first criminal prosecution designed to enforce the Wagner Labor Relations Act. Harlan and Jersey City—these are the running sores of totalitarian ruthlessness that must be restored to health if American democracy is to survive.

The statute, which may succeed in bringing both Jersey City and Harlan back to the United States, provides that "if two or more persons conspire to injure, oppress, threaten, or intimidate any citizen in the free exercise and enjoyment of any right or privilege secured to him by the Constitution or laws of the United States, or because of his having so exercised the same . . . they shall be fined not more than $5,000 and imprisoned not more than ten years, and shall, moreover, be thereafter ineligible to any office, or place of honor, profit, or trust created by the Constitution or laws of the United States." That seems to fit Mayor Hague and the Harlan fascisti to a T.

Nobody Starves?

IN opposing President Roosevelt's recovery program, the Republicans—and with them the reactionary bloc of Democrats—wail at what they call the administration's spending spree. Why not let the communities finance their own relief, they ask. Why saddle the cost of local unemployment on the federal government?

All of which recalls the happy Hoover days when there was no federal relief and

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when private charity, and state and municipal handouts (where such existed), kept twelve to fifteen millions in semi-destitution or outright starvation. Even in those cities and states where the entire relief burden is not borne by federal funds and where it represents only a small percentage of the total number unable to get jobs in private industry, the breakdown has been terrifying. During the last week, the unemployed dependent on state relief have been given food allowances which in Cleveland average twelve cents a week and in Chicago amount to a monthly ration of a pound each of rice, prunes, butter, and beans, three stalks of celery, three pounds of cabbage, and eight pounds of oranges. Such a diet is inadequate for a week, let alone a month.

In Cleveland, Republican Mayor Burton blames Democratic Governor Davey for the breakdown. Thus he attempts to smear the New Deal—though Davey is negotiating with the Republicans for support in the coming primaries on an anti-New Deal platform. Relief is a football by which reaction hopes to discredit the national administration. And 600,000 desperate men and women in Illinois are the victims in this political game; Governor Horner's emergency-relief program advocates a $4,500,000 appropriation for nine months, which means the sum of fifty cents a week per person. In Cleveland, 70,000 clients have on four recent occasions faced a "no food" crisis. Yet the politicians stall and make speeches passing the buck.

The solution, as the Workers Alliance, Labor's Non-Partisan League, the trade unions, and the progressives have pointed out, is immediate provision of adequate relief by increasing taxation on those who can bear the burden, no increase in sales taxes, and the speedy approval of the President's recovery program. The corollary is defeat at the polls in the coming elections of all officeholders who would hold back relief funds and who have not fought for necessary state appropriations.

Mexican Fascists on the Run

MEXICO is another country which is demonstrating that quick, decisive action by a united people can spike the conspiracies of fascism. For the second time within a few weeks, rebellion, fostered and financed by foreign reaction, has been unleashed in the Western hemisphere. And this time its proximity to the United States serves to explode isolationist complacence, which conceives the fascist threat solely in terms of an attack on our coastlines. The rebellion of Gen. Saturnino Cedillo was long in the making. The agents of the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis and of the predatory British and American oil interests had for months been grooming him for the role of Mexican Franco. The popular-front government of President Cárdenas, however, instead of following the "realistic" policy of retreating before threats and fattening fascism with concessions, rallied the people behind it and took the initiative. The expropriation of the British and American oil companies, the rupture of diplomatic relations with Great Britain, and the sending of troops to Cedillo's stronghold in the province of San Luis Potosi to nip the rebellion in the bud were swift, courageous steps in a program designed to safeguard democracy and assure the political and economic independence of Mexico.

At this writing Cedillo's forces are continuing to wage guerrilla warfare in the hills and forests of San Luis Potosi, but they are definitely on the defensive. The government troops are making every effort to avoid bloodshed, but President Cárdenas, backed by the overwhelming majority of the people, has made it clear that fascist conspiracy and insurrection will not be tolerated on Mexican soil. The measures he is taking to prevent Mexico from being converted into a second Spain are a blow to our own economic royalists and reactionaries and deserve every support from the people and the government of the United States.

Japan Gets in Deeper

THE capture of Suchow, far from being the crushing *coup de grace* for which the Japanese had hoped, only marks the end of the first stage of a campaign which must draw the invaders still farther into the Chinese interior and prolong indefinitely a struggle which has already dealt such heavy blows to Japanese economy and military prestige. Without underestimating the seriousness of the loss to the Chinese of this important railway junction, it can be said that the Japanese troubles have only just begun. Suchow was won only after four months of the costliest kind of fighting, during which the Japanese suffered at Taierhchwang their greatest military defeat in modern times. And instead of shattering the Chinese armies in Southern Shantung, the bulk of the Chinese troops have escaped.

Some of these are counter-attacking with such vigor that they are reported to have retaken Lanfeng, Yifeng, and Tangshan, key cities on the Lun-Hai railway west of Suchow. Far from dominating the Central China war zone, the Japanese will be compelled to dissipate their strength in the defense of their lines of communications against constant harassment from Chinese partisan troops. Hankow, provisional capital of China southwest of Suchow, is still a long way off, and meanwhile ten months of what was originally scheduled to be a brief "incident" have cost Japan 400,000 casualties, the loss of one-half of her gold reserve and one-third of her foreign trade.

Clothing Workers Convene

THE convention of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers has provided clear and statesmanlike leadership not only for the 225,000 members of this great CIO union, but for the entire labor and progressive movement. The convention gave its unanimous support to President Roosevelt in his fight against the reactionary Republican-Democratic coalition, and unanimously endorsed the O'Connell peace bill, which embodies the policy of collective security. The latter step is particularly significant. It marks an advance over the peace resolution adopted by the United Mine Workers in January which, while condemning the aggressions of fascist Germany, Italy, and Japan, and supporting the Japanese boycott, was not specific in regard to American foreign policy. The UMW resolution, in turn, was an improvement over the isolationist resolution passed by the convention of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee. Thus it may be said that the action of the Amalgamated convention expresses the growing sentiment within the ranks of the CIO—and undoubtedly in the AF of L as well—for a clearcut policy of collective economic measures to restrain the fascist aggressors.

The delegates called for the immediate passage of the wages-and-hours bill as part of a larger recovery program already outlined by the administration. This would include the broadening of present social-security legislation, the passage of the Wagner-Steagall housing bill, and wider relief and unemployment legislation as the "minimum condition" for the protection of the "health and security of the nation."

Significant too was the convention's constructive attitude toward the question of labor unity. President Sidney Hillman made it clear that the CIO has no quarrel with the members of the AF of L and is determined to spare no efforts to reunite the trade-union movement. But unity means building unions already in existence and enlisting the unorganized. "The stronger the labor movement," President Hillman told the convention, "the sooner a unified labor movement." And it was emphasized that this same unity should be extended to the political field—the mobilization of labor and all progressives behind common objectives and common candidates. The convention endorsed Labor's Non-Partisan League and left no doubt of

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its opposition to any such ventures as the La Follette third party, whose only effect can be to divide the progressive forces.

Walt Whitman's Birthday

MIKE GOLD had the idea first. Week after week he has been agitating in his column for a People's Culture Day to coincide with the anniversary of Walt Whitman's birthday, May 31. It takes a little time for a splendid idea like that to take hold, and we hope that Mike doesn't give it up as a lost cause. We're ready to do our share to put the idea over by May 31 next year.

No figure in our literature more appropriately symbolizes the aspirations of the people toward a better society. Whitman participated heartily in the life of his countrymen. Carpenter, printer, teacher, journalist, Civil War volunteer, clerk—here was a poet who derived his theme and his speech from the masses whom he celebrated in everything that he wrote. His "individualism" cannot be discussed apart from his identification with the exploited everywhere. The opening lines of *Leaves of Grass* establish the mood and purpose of his work:

One's-self I sing, a simple separate person,
Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse.

In his sweeping rhythms he established the dignity of the individual and the strength of the cooperative ideal. In his great prose work, *Democratic Vistas,* he gave brilliant and prophetic utterance to our fight for the preservation of popular government.

Whitman endures. His spirit sustains the passionate affirmations of Carl Sandburg's *The People, Yes.* His faith in the common man is embodied in the work of the proletarian writers. His work is a monument to our heritage of freedom. It is altogether proper to commemorate the birthday of this creator of a people's literature by inaugurating a People's Culture Day.

Collective Action Checks Hitler

FIRM Stand By The Czechs Eases Tension In Europe proclaimed the headlines on the historic May 23. Despite Nazi blustering, saber-rattling, and threats, the Czechs' prompt and vigorous demonstration of their readiness to defend their freedom and independence had its immediate effect. Hitler's armies were held at bay; they dared not cross the Czech border.

What actually occurred can be gleaned from the graphic and penetrating reports by G. E. R. Gedye, Prague correspondent of the New York *Times:*

> Fuller information now available leaves no room for doubt that between last Thursday and Sunday Germany was preparing for a repetition of the Austrian invasion, which was averted by the decisive attitude of this little republic. Its resolute will to live and defend the achievements of the last twenty years belied the pessimists and defeatists who have been so industriously proclaiming in recent months that it was all over but the shouting for Czechoslovakia.
>
> The assumption that an invasion of Czechoslovakia would be a walk-over is no longer tenable. The only question now is whether the potential aggressors are prepared to face a European war—perhaps a world conflict between the forces of democracy and dictatorship. There is no room for doubt that they are not so prepared, but it took this little country to make it evident.

Fascists are bullies, and bullies are mostly cowards. They strut heroically over the timid and supine; they retreat ignominiously when they envisage a stiff fight. Little Czechoslovakia understood the psychology of Nazi bluff, and exploded it. Of course, Czechoslovakian defiance was encouraged by the French and Soviet democracies. Their position was unequivocal: Nazi aggression would be met with collective action. The British tories, only too prone to yield to Nazi importunities, were faced with a dilemma. Flagrant yielding to the Nazis would arouse too much resentment at home. They twisted and turned and writhed and argued and finally suggested that in case of a war in Central Europe Britain couldn't guarantee that France would not fight, implying Britain also might be drawn in.

The first serious application of the principles of collective security was made at the Nyon Conference, when the concerted efforts of the democratic countries put a stop to fascist piracy in the Mediterranean. Now, the second serious application of the same principles again shows immediate and highly satisfactory results. The lesson is clear: the fascist aggressors in Berlin, Rome, and Tokyo have not the economic resources or the financial strength or the moral stamina to stand up against real resistance. They are conquering heroes when they throttle weak and defenseless peoples. They could not and would not stand up against the concerted actions of all the democratic and peace-loving countries.

Collective security, concerted action against the fascist aggressors—this, and not the craven, compromising "appeasement" policy advocated by the Chamberlains and Halifaxes, is the realistic policy. And what happened to the inane cogitations of the editorial scribes in the capitalist press? How ponderously they advocated the cynical fatalism, and the hypocritical "realism" enunciated by the master mind, Chamberlain. Not a fortnight has elapsed, and already the New York *Herald Tribune* admits that "the Chamberlain policy of negotiation . . . would seem to be faced with some serious modifications," and that "by their boldness the Czechs have infused a new strength into the British-French-Russian combination." So who, after all, is right—the Soviet Union and the Communist Parties of the world who have in every instance, in Manchukuo, Ethiopia, Spain, Austria, and now Czechoslovakia, advocated the bold application of collective-security principles, or the tories, reactionaries, and isolationists, who mouthed *ad nauseam* meaningless words about "appeasement"?

The fact that in the elections the two parties that stood for national unity—Benes' National Socialist Party and the Communist Party—showed the greatest gains is significant. The 20 percent gain of the Communist Party in the Czech districts is especially spectacular. As in Spain, as in China, as in France, as in this country, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia has throughout been the staunchest supporter of collective security and tireless in its advocacy of the popular front. At the beginning of the crisis the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia issued the following widely circulated statement:

> Fully aware of the gravity of the hour, we approve and support entirely all measures taken for the security, integrity, and independence of the republic. We call upon the whole people to maintain calm, order, and discipline. We appeal to workers and the urban and rural working people to form a bloc of national unity without political or national distinctions. We urge all nationalities to put aside everything, to mount guard over peace and the fatherland. Set aside all party interests, safeguard peace, security, and independence! Proclaim your unshakeable will to act, to be united in acting with those determined to defend the republic! We urge all Communists and organizations to remain at their posts in this spirit. Communists of Czechoslovakia, in the first ranks for the defense of the republic.

The events in Czechoslovakia are heartening. The danger is by no means past, but already Czechoslovakia, backed by the USSR and (more timorously) by France, has shown the way to halt fascist aggression—the way of unity of all democratic forces within and without the country.

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FORSYTHE'S PAGE

I Like Granville Hicks

OUT of sheer regard for the gentleman, I journeyed north as far as Boston last week to see if it would be proper for Granville Hicks to desert Grafton, N. Y. As readers of the Hearst press will be aware, Mr. Hicks was (recently) appointed to a place on the Harvard faculty. The resulting outcry from good burghers named McGinnis, McCloskey, and O'Donnell was tremendous. It seems that Hicks is an alien influence. It was established further that McGinnis, McCloskey, O'Donnell, and many others who unfortunately had not been able to make the *Mayflower* but had caught the *Berengaria* were aghast at the thought of a Hicks corrupting Boston.

The excuse that Hicks will be living in Cambridge and not in Boston has no weight with me. Admittedly, the influence of Harvard on Boston is as the influence of Norman Thomas on Jersey City, but Harvard cannot escape so readily from Boston. It may consider that it is an embattled fortress separated from Boston by the moat known as the Charles River, but Boston gets in with no difficulty. Through the agency of its daily newspapers (incomparably the worst in the world with the exception of Los Angeles and London), Boston has power in Cambridge; whereas Cambridge has none whatever in Boston.

In these circumstances, all that can be said is that Harvard is getting the best of it. Grafton's loss is Boston's gain. Mr. Hicks' *I Like America* was reviewed last week and I have little to add to that except that the flag-wavers of Back Bay will be well advised to keep out of any discussion with Mr. Hicks about their patriotism. It would be far easier to attack him on the weaknesses of his punctuation than on the fervor of his Americanism. The initial chapters of his book are as beautiful and idyllic as anything ever written about America. It is what all of us feel about this country as we wander over it. What a marvelous land it is! How great it could be—and how far below its possibilities it falls! As I have said before, one feels in driving over California that it alone could keep the world. And yet there are hundreds of thousands of migratory workers in that state starving with food all around them. The fine, grand, capitalistic system—with its sharecroppers (you have never seen degradation until you have visited the South), its textile workers, its coal miners, its turpentine workers! Why, in all decency, must the United States of America continue as it is? Do you dispute the fact that this country, if allowed to produce to capacity without thought of profit, could be as near paradise as anything the world has ever known?

Hicks is a practical Communist. He merely says: This is true, this is true—and this must be true. The facts about the hideous side of America are not hard to ferret out; they can be seen by anybody who is not afraid to look. That anybody should starve or suffer from lack of food or from lack of a roof over his head in this country is an immoral and indecent fact which will be a subject for wonder in the generations to come. If capitalism can do it, why hasn't capitalism done it? If the system won't work, what is the sensible thing to do? Look around for something that will. Is this fanaticism? Is this wild theorizing? Is this subversive thinking? Then Hicks is a fanatic and a subversive element—something difficult to believe when you know the man.

You would know him best if you visited him at Grafton, which is on the road between Troy, N. Y., and Williamstown, Mass. Grafton is a place where Hicks will get an urgent wire by mail next day. He lives on a farm, has no telephone, and is just getting over the delight of his first electric lights. He bought the farm while he was still teaching at Rensselaer and was glad to have it when that fine institution discovered that its budget was short and Hicks was a handy man to cut off the faculty. His radical beliefs having nothing to do with the decision, naturally. He lives about a mile out of Grafton on a road which becomes entirely unruly in winter and maroons him. He lives there with his wife and daughter and his father and mother. The food is excellent, the beer is good, and you will get along fine by merely watching Squire Hicks carefully when he seeks to line you up in front of the barn with a paint brush in your hand. He has some nonsensical idea that guests like to work.

For the life of me, I can never remember whether Hicks is short or tall. He is thin, and I suppose you might call him wiry, but what you remember best about him is his way of speaking. Your first thought is that he possesses an extraordinarily high-pitched drawl, something which seems utterly incongruous in a man of his intensity. But as he continues to speak, you find that he hasn't a drawl at all, but rather a New England growl or gnashing of words which is extremely effective in debate. I have never seen him excited, and yet his voice, when in the midst of an argument, can be as incisive as a jab in the eye even when his voice is doing nothing but crunching up words and emitting them in hoarse bursts.

At Grafton he worked on his books, did writing for this and other magazines, acted as a sort of editor for a publishing house, and seemed to be settled for life. Why he wanted to go to Harvard is beyond me, but it may only be that he was snowbound once too often on that road. He can do a world of good in Cambridge, and from what I could learn up there, they were grateful at the thought of getting him. There is a suspicion in some quarters that his hiring was a gesture meant to excuse Harvard for firing Sweezy and Walsh, and only time will tell about that. Put entirely on the basis of what Hicks can do for Harvard, it is a break for the old institution. If he does no more than speak to the young gentlemen in the manner he has used in *I Like America,* he will do more for them than a month spent on Bunker Hill or in the Widener Memorial Library. I looked the university over carefully on my recent visit, and it was plain that a touch of Grafton would help the place. I am afraid that the ordinary Harvard undergraduate still feels that Walter Lippmann and John Reed are characters of equal importance since they were members of the same class. Hicks will cure that with a few well-placed growls.

From this you may gather that I consider Hicks a great fellow and a great writer and a great radical. I do—all three. There have been critics (including some who were then our own) who held him in disdain, and there will be critics of *I Like America* who will be very tut-tutty and regretful that Mr. Hicks has not been more temperate in his remarks, but you need have no worry about either type. He happens to be one of the better Americans, a staunch old New Englander who can trace his ancestors straight back to the original old scow, the *Mayflower,* and who knows what America can be and is irate at what it is. I led you astray when I said he was a practical Communist. He is that, but he is a lot more. He combines with that practicality a flaming manner of expression and an intensity of feeling that make him a force in American literature. You get all that in *I Like America.* The book should be compulsory reading for the middle classes.

The idea of Hicks even being near Boston frightens me. At the very least he is likely to get apoplectic from reading a list of the new books which are to be barred from the Boston stores and the public library. He will be able to read Cardinal O'Connell's words hot from the pulpit, replete with nonsense phrases. Are we to allow Hicks to throw himself into this caldron of mediocrity? Are we to allow him to waste his genius on a lot of young punks with stable haircuts and brains full of genealogy? I'm afraid we are. He seems determined.

ROBERT FORSYTHE.

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Who Won in Pennsylvania?

By Bruce Minton

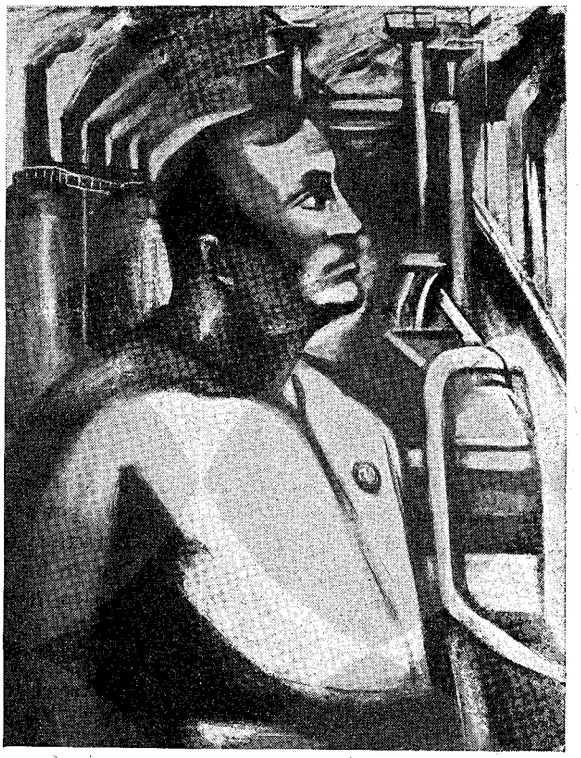
THE truth is, the outcome in Pennsylvania does not warrant the elation expressed in the headlines of the anti-labor newspapers. The Roosevelt-baiters are definitely counting chickens after taking a hasty look at a few china eggs. No one can deny that the failure of Lieut. Gov. Thomas Kennedy to win the Democratic nomination makes the task of the progressives more difficult. But any close analysis of what happened in Pennsylvania shows that the democratic forces made a remarkable stand, and promise to control the run-off in November.

It is not a case of whistling in the dark. Kennedy's defeat illustrated once again that a division within the labor movement hamstrings the organization of the progressives. The inability of Labor's Non-Partisan League to nominate its candidates robs it of the opportunity of electing the most desirable men to office. But it does not destroy the democratic front, nor does it mean that labor and its allies have lost their chance to exert political influence. The primaries prove that the progressives hold the balance of power. The task ahead is that of reforming their lines to meet the changed outlook.

Out of the 1,300,000 votes cast for the Democrats, Kennedy received over 520,000. He lost the nomination by the narrow margin of some 60,000 votes. He was beaten in the cities—where machine politics, so developed and so corrupt in Pennsylvania, are the strongest. He carried a majority of the counties outside of the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh areas. And his vote was accumulated without the aid of campaign cigars and other inducements of a more personal nature that are an integral part of what the New York *Times* politely dubs the "old traditions of a political democracy."

Why did Kennedy lose? Not merely because the machine mowed him down. Primarily it was William Green's and the AF of L executive council's pledge to defeat any candidate, no matter how deserving, who was supported by the CIO, that prevented Kennedy from winning. As in Seattle last March, the AF of L's top leadership threw itself into the campaign without any pretense of determining the qualifications of the candidates, anxious only to undermine the CIO. The 35,000 votes that could have changed the results of the primary were for the most part the ballots of union men misled by the AF of L bureaucracy. What was surprising was not that these voters listened to their union superiors but that the AF of L unions as a whole disregarded instructions and, despite all the vituperation of their own officers, endorsed Kennedy. The rift in the labor movement, initiated and preserved by the Federation council, is still sufficiently wide to aid reaction at the polls. Yet its influence is narrowing; the task of the progressive forces is to close the rift without further delay.

Kennedy's reversal can also be attributed to other weaknesses in the progressive ranks. Dwelling on them does not mean making excuses for the defeat. An accurate appraisal of these weaknesses can serve to warn progressives who face primaries in other states. Labor's Non-Partisan League neglected—not nearly to the extent that it did in Detroit, but nevertheless enough to lessen Kenndy's chances of success—to make clear to the people that its slate was not dominated by the CIO. The League had selected its candidates from the progressive forces throughout the state. Yet it did not impress this fact sufficiently on the voters. The newspapers insisted that Kennedy was merely a front for John L. Lewis, who was making a bid for political power. The libel, now beginning to appear slightly frayed, was advanced that the CIO wanted to run Pennsylvania and ultimately the nation. Actually, the CIO—and John L. Lewis—joined the widest possible coalition to fight reaction and to support the broadest implications of the New Deal (just as the Communist Party joined that coalition). Aligned with labor, which in this case included the rank and file of the AF of L and the Railway Brotherhoods as well as the CIO unions, were professionals, small businessmen, liberals and middle-class people of all descriptions, and that vital section of the electorate, the farmers. Their concern was to extend relief, to assure adequate housing, to broaden WPA, to fight monopoly, to protect the National Labor Relations Act, and to assure the passage of the President's recovery program and the wages-and-hours bill. The League's platform answered the needs of labor; it also answered the needs of the farmers and the middle-class groups that compose a democratic front. The drawback was the League's inability to overcome the label "CIO" and to gain sufficient support among the more conservative Democrats. And the Farley plug, which was supposed to represent the endorsement of the national administration, came too late to do much good, and, in certain cases, only confused the fence-sitters.



Painting by Elizabeth Olds

Steel Worker

With over half a million votes, the League's power can scarcely be dismissed. Its votes will be the deciding factor in the coming election. What roads lie open to the League?

The Democrats nominated Charles A. Jones for governor and Gov. George H. Earle for United States Senator. They will oppose the Republicans, Arthur H. James, Superior Court Judge, whose decision on the compensation act would have deprived workers of compensation for injury if it had not been overruled, and James J. (Puddler Jim) Davis with his unsavory past. Judge James defeated the sham liberal, Gifford Pinchot, who hoped to garner progressive votes by pretending to favor the New Deal "on certain issues," and who expected the reactionaries to flock to his banner because of his gubernatorial record. But James, whose campaign was devoted to attacking the Roosevelt administration, who told homely jokes and pledged reduction of spending when that spending went for relief, housing, or other concessions, was the safer man; the reactionaries gave him a half-million margin over Pinchot, who incidentally pledged support to James in the run-off election. That the Republican nominees are in the classic tradition of Hoover and Ham Fish was apparent in their campaign speeches. There is the unforgettable tableau in my mind of Judge James standing in the late-spring drizzle on the steps of the hotel at Shenandoah (the center of the anthracite region) with his so-pretty daughter

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at his side, smiling bravely into the rain at the apathetic miners. The children liked the band and the chance to beg nickels from the Republican liberator. The minister intoned, "All that is done at this meeting should be for the glory of God." And James recounted how he, too, had once been a miner and now it was time to take away special privileges and to stop throwing money about for relief and housing and other "nonsense." These miners did not nominate James; neither did the farmers. He is the voice of the anti-labor, anti-progressive, anti-democratic forces and the people they mislead into their ranks. He is the bitter enemy of everything the people desire.

It is out of the question for Labor's Non-Partisan League to support the Republicans. More than that, the defeat of the Republican Party becomes the most important political task of the progressives. But that defeat can only be administered by a unified opposition. It is the goal of the democratic front to preserve the liberties of the people and to fight for their needs. Against the Republican semi-fascism, the League can endorse the Jones-Earle ticket. And it can win many of the votes that went to Pinchot or to James—votes of progressives who registered Republican because not so long ago the dominant political party in the state was Republican and any wise man who wanted preferment saw to it that his party affiliation was in order. Thousands who support President Roosevelt, thousands who endorse the New Deal remain Republicans for the primaries. As many explained to me, to change now would mean to lose the advantages of being loyal party men—at least on paper—a distinction they had taken years to establish. They would change their registration when they could be sure the Democrats were in once and for all. In the meantime, they voted Republican in the primaries; and in the run-off elections—well, each said, between ourselves, I'm a New Dealer.

The Non-Partisan League can certainly endorse the Jones-Earle ticket without losing face. Governor Earle has shown a certain willingness to give the labor unions fair treatment—a watered, hesitant willingness, to be sure, but an attitude that grows as the strength of the progressives is augmented and felt. Backing of the Democratic ticket by the League—a third party at this time would mean splitting the progressive vote and assuring a Republican victory—would not imply capitulating to the more reactionary forces within the Democratic Party. It would mean that labor would continue to exert its independent political role and would demand concessions from the candidates. Since the League holds the decisive balance of power, it retains the ability to push the candidates into a more progressive position and to commit them to a program that will express the wishes of the electorate—protection of civil rights, extension of relief, social security, housing, farm aid, and assurance of the right to organize, strike, picket, and agitate for the improvement of working conditions.

That hope of such action is not based merely on wishful thinking is borne out in the statement by Charles A. Jones, nominee for governor, made immediately after the primary:

> The results of yesterday's primary presents a clearcut issue between Democratic liberalism and Republican reaction. All who believe in the democracy and humanitarian policies of President Roosevelt and Governor Earle are urged to unite in the fight to repulse the forces of reaction to the end that liberal administration of our state government in the interest of the whole people may be preserved and continued.

To which the democratic front led by Labor's Non-Partisan League can only answer, "Splendid! Now we must assure this democracy of which you speak by pledging definite support to specific legislation that will guarantee and broaden this democracy, and we must outline a platform that will prove to the voters that the defeat of Republican reaction will also forward the vital interests of the people."

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The Story of Joe Masarak

They say those days the mills worked night an' day,
They say the men they all got damn good pay;
They say *Joe Masarak's* pail it was so big
That Annie put inside one big fat pig. . . .

"Say, you fellas talk about this Joe . . .
Is he somebody that you used to know?

Look at this young greenhorn—how he talk!
He does not know who's *Joseph Masarak!*

In Nanty-Glo, near Johnstown there was fine
Night when Masarak was born in mine—
They say no woman give to Joe her breast
Because he was not born like all us rest—
They say no mother give to Joe her milk—
They say his blood was coal like finest silk:
Many things they tell about our Joe
In Pennsylvania an' Nanty-Glo:
Old men they tell how Joe sit down an' think
In coal saloons where miners come to drink:
"Who owns the *hills?"* sometime our Joe he said
An' all the miners they then shake their head:
Sometime a miner he would say, "The boss . . ."
Joe Masarak then said, "No! No! It's us!"
"We own the hills!" *Joe Masarak* he say,
"We own the coal because we work all day!"
"An' then our coal is put in railroad car
An' pulled by bosses' engine very far."—
One day Joe walks on bosses' railroad track!
Like this!—he holds the bosses' engine back!
Ha! he was good an' strong like steel, our Joe!
An' what he said us working men should know!

"Long go those times, not much like now—your Joe
He starve to death if he worked here, I know. . . ."

To Pittsburgh then our Joe he went they say
An' got a job in steel mill right away. . . .
Sometime in furnace Joe sit down an' think
An' in his hand scoop up some steel an' drink
To see if it is time to take it out . . .
Like wife's good soup, good meat an' sauerkraut:
One day Joe hit the furnace with his fist
An' steel jump up like rain . . . an' furnace hiss:
"Who own the mills?" *Joe Masarak* he say,
"We own the mills because we work all day!"
Ha! good an' strong like steel he was our Joe,
An' what he said us working men should know!

"An where's he now, your Joseph Masarak?
I'd like to meet him, so to hear him talk."

They say if heart is good, you'll see our Joe
Inside the furnace an' he'll say, "Hello."
They say when fella work long time in mine
He see Joe's eyes where in the coal they shine!
Ha! he was good and strong like steel, our Joe!
An' what he said us working men should know!

ROBERT CLAIRMONT.

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Parable of the Rigamajigatrician

By Harry Clave

IN the beginning there was a rigamajig factory and A. Moribund System created he it. And he called in the Machine Tool People, and the Power People, and the Working People, and he said, "Let there be rigamajigs." And there were rigamajigs. And in those days was life simple, and when A. Moribund's billfold ran over he took of the excess to buy him new lap robes.

And when the purchase of lap robes no longer sufficed to ease the bulge of the billfold, and when it had grown into a very wen upon his hip, A. Moribund called in the Machine Tool People and the Power People; but the Working People did he not call in. And he said, "Let rigamajigs be made more cheaply and abundantly, for the world's yearning after rigamajigs is not fulfilled." And his helpers were fecund with remedies unto his billfold, and were not content to build him a new rigamajig builder, called a Technological Rigamajigatizer, but they streamlined his rigamajigs and bundled them round with cellophane, and even the least among the rigamajigs was demagnetized, and deodorized, and advertised. And with ease were all these things done, but the advertising was never done.

And A. Moribund found that the advertising had brought into being strange creatures, called Public Relations Counsels, and now these were with him forever. And of much did they alter the order, saying that thereafter the factory must be called a Rigamajigatorium, and that A. Moribund must take unto himself the title of Rigamajigatrician. And though A. Moribund knew not how to consider all the wonders which the Public Relations Counsels wrought, yet did he have much joy in his new title.

And even as he rejoiced he was smitten by a great twinge in the hip, and A. Moribund knew the twinge for arthritis which cometh from obesity of the billfold. And A. Moribund would have called in his old helpers, but lo, even as he reached for his caller-in, there was a mighty tumult in the streets. And A. Moribund asked after the reason of the harsh sounds, and it was disclosed that the workers in the vineyards and some of his own unemployed were gathered, shouting for rigamajigs. And when A. Moribund marveled at this, saying there was an abundance of rigamajigs in the market-place, the Public Relations Counsels answered, and said, "Yea, but these are an improvident lot, and have not the wherewithal to buy thy rigamajigs." And A. Moribund said, "Verily now, thinketh these men 'tis Christmas?" And the Public Relations Counsels were free with sayings, but A. Moribund had such another twinge that he heard not a word.

Soriano

And now a voice was heard from without, saying, "Let us take the rigamajigs unto ourselves, for lo, we have created them, and our need is great, and they lie rusting in the storehouse." And straightway A. Moribund was angered with a mighty anger, and he cried, "*They* created the rigamajigs, forsooth! Why here are men who would despoil my prestige even as they would rob me of my rigamajigs! Let the tear gas descend."

And the tear gas descended, and the multitude was dispersed, and the rigamajigs rusted in the storehouse, and the Rigamajigatrician's arthritic twinges increased apace. And now a thing called Conspicuous Waste was proclaimed a virtue among the mighty of the earth, and under its exactions the People Who Count were moved to buy an exceeding number of lap robes, lest the degree of their Counting should not reveal itself unto the eye. And into this race did A. Moribund enter with great passion, and lo, in the end it was seen that A. Moribund had more lap robes than all the rest.

And when neither Conspicuous Waste, nor endowments to wisdom, nor feasts, nor circuses, would suffice to dent the billfold, it came about that there was no peace in the land by reason of people groaning after rigamajigs and A. Moribund moaning with arthritis. And A. Moribund was sorely tried lest he should lose honor as a Rigamajigatrician by easing the torment of the billfold, and he lamented: "*Truly,* the great of the earth suffer sore trials!"

And now the Wise Men and the Machine Tool People, the Public Relations Counsels, and the Efficiency People were summoned to an assembly to ease the troubled spirit of A. Moribund. And as they came together their ears were assailed by the voices of the poor asking for a place at the council. But these the Wise Men rebuked, saying, "Ye are but the thirsty of the earth, and A. Moribund is the giver of the salt which maketh ye to thirst." And when the council was gathered A. Moribund bewailed the day wherein he was born, saying his rigamajigs wrought no good, bringing only angry reproaches from without and arthritic twinges from within. And the Wise Men would have assuaged him with soft sayings, but voices from the market-place ever shouted, "Give us bread and rigamajigs"; and the woes of A. Moribund were renewed.

And now the Public Relations Counsels recalled to him their old saying that the multitude was improvident and A. Moribund turned on them with hot answer, crying, "Verily, if thy words were as manna, ye could feed multitudes." And it came about that by scorning the Public Relations Counsels, A. Moribund had affrighted the gathering. The Wise Men perceived that sayings which were honored of old had now lost their savor, and even the Machine Tool People hid their blueprints. And none durst speak up to appease A. Moribund save only the Efficiency People, who had brought some new words of dazzling brightness.

And these spake of Technology, which maketh unemployment even as it creates new jobs, and they said, "Those who cry out today will rejoice tomorrow on a new assembly line, for they are but Technologically Unemployed." And A. Moribund perceived that though he could make nothing of this riddle, it would be likewise with the humble in the market-place, and he commanded that these new words should be shown to the multitude.

AND IT CAME TO PASS that when the humble saw these words they were greatly bemused. Some marveled, saying, "Yea, our estate is surely changed if it meriteth these new words which go so hardly over the tongue." And others sought greater hope, saying, "And if we be but technologically idle, it may hap that our hunger is likewise technological." But there were yet others who grumbled as before, saying, "Yea, but our bellies still make sour moan, and it soundeth not like a technological moan." And the truth in the words of these last found credit with the multitude, for many had wondered at the disquietude of their bellies even as they marveled over the new words. And straightway they gathered in the market-place, crying after technological food, for the new word had so enthralled them that they coupled it unto anything.

And there were wars and rumors of wars, and panics and depressions and recessions, and in these days a great company of soothsayers gathered to impart of their wisdom to A. Moribund. And among them were Inflationists and Deflationists, Managed Currency Men and Free Silver Men; and those who

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said that the trouble arose from Underconsumption, and those who put blame upon Overproduction. And it came to pass that now one and now another was the apple of A. Moribund's eye, and was much praised by the Public Relations Counsels as the Valiant One who would find the Corner around which Prosperity lurketh. And some lingered near A. Moribund a longer while, and some lingered a shorter while, but the Corner revealed itself unto none of them.

And at length it was found that each had offended A. Moribund in the same manner; for one exaction had he put equally upon all of them, one commandment had he given unto each that they might not transgress. And A. Moribund had said, "Thou mayest try thy precepts out on the land, seeing we are in dire need of succor, and thou mayest proclaim any change that is needful save only such changes as will put a check on mine initiative. For restraint upon mine initiative will I not endure and anything that toucheth upon the obesity of my billfold will I interpret as a plague upon mine initiative." And when the soothsayers did try out their doctrines each came to a place where A. Moribund's billfold blocked up their way; and when any attempted to touch the billfold he was speedily cast down.

And it came to pass that when all these sundry soothsayers had failed to find the Corner, and when the Public Relations Counsels were no longer a solace, a great weariness entered into the soul of A. Moribund. And he perceived that even unto the end there would be round about him much confusion of doctrine and that the clashing of words did but add to the sum of his woes. And when all the strength had departed from his sinews, yet did A. Moribund revile all who approached him, saying that Production for Use would cure his afflictions.

And whatever their complexion did he call them by the epithet, Red, saying, "Yea, and ye tell me that the tributes to my billfold do constrain my brethren from possession of the rigamajigs I have made, even as the girth of my billfold hath ever increased my arthritis. And ye tell me of the need of the lowly and how mine loyalty unto the billfold hath wrought havoc everywhere; but ye are subversive forces who would overturn the very foundations of order. For know ye, in the beginning it was loyalty unto the billfold that brought rigamajigs into being, and that mine initiative was pricked into action by the slenderness of my wad. How otherwise would I have called upon the Machine Tool People and the Power People and the Working People to bring these things about; and how can it be otherwise with any man but that he be moved unto great things by his love of the billfold? Thou canst not deny that the love of the billfold was the ointment which eased my birth; thou canst not deny that this ointment hath ever lent a sleek appearance unto mine limbs; and yet would ye have me believe this goodly ointment is now a corruption whose smell offendeth the nostrils of my brethren? But hearken ye, ye unregenerate billfold defilers, and know ye that though mine arthritis lays me low, and though thy doctrines echo over all the earth, and though the number of your followers becomes a hundred times ten million, yet will I cling unto the love of the billfold. For in this love have I had my birth and my being, in this love have I brought forth rigamajigs and endowed universities, and unto this love will I be true even unto death. Let there be wars in far places and disorders under my window, let many be put under yokes and brother murder brother, and yet will I not be moved from my first love. Yea, though the earth and the heavens cry out for change, though my billfold bring me a thrice grievous arthritis, still will I never forsake it."

And the wars went on, and the rigamajigs still rusted in the storehouses, and the Rigamajigatrician moaned ever louder with arthritis. And in this way did things continue all the days of A. Moribund System.

The Case of Mary Taglieri

By Meyer Levin

BECAUSE Mrs. Mary Taglieri's name is in the second half of the alphabet, there is nothing to eat in her house. When they ran out of relief money in Chicago, they had only got as far as the M's. Now they are handing out packages of food from the federal "surplus" stores, to the rest, but as even Mary's three-year-old Della Ann knows, T comes way down on the list. This is a new way to learn the alphabet. It is also a new way to learn about words, for instance "surplus," which used to mean over and above one's needs.

Mrs. Mary Taglieri lives on the first floor of a two-story frame house at 7542 Ellis Ave. The street is broken, with occasional craters, but that does not matter much as the folks around here are not bothered with the possession of automobiles. The Taglieri's was taken a year ago, just after her husband died. They lived on a paved street, then.

The house is about like the one Mrs. O'Leary lived in, before the Chicago fire. Paint has peeled off the walls and doors. Mrs. Taglieri's nine-year-old Philip is with a bunch of kids on the sidewalk. He calls his mother, because there is no bell.

She is like a girl, quick, Italian-dark, and beautiful. Her cheeks are hollow the way the movie queens try to make theirs hollow; but Mary's come that way legitimately, and the feverish luster of her eyes is legitimate too. She's just back from the hospital. She has gall-bladder trouble, and she's generally run down, nervous; she looks to weigh just about a hundred pounds.

A year ago things were different. Her husband was a steel worker, proud of being the second generation in the mill; he was the youngest first-helper on the open-hearth. Mary is only twenty-eight, but Italians don't wait to know life; she had had a marriage, a child, a divorce when she loved Tony. And then the second child with him, and they were nuts about each other, and he was nuts about Philip, too, and they were getting along fine.

But Tony died suddenly last year. His union helped Mary along for several months; finally, in January, she was able to get on relief. She received $46 monthly; that was cut to $43, and last month to $36. Out of which she has to pay $15 for rent. Then gas and light.

She is so quick, vivid, young, it sounds comical when she says, "Some nights I think maybe I'd better just take the two kids and walk east, and keep on walking." Into the lake, she means.

Della Ann runs in, warm, flushed, and seeing the stranger, hides behind her mother.

"She's bashful, huh?"

"Oh, you ought to see her after she gets acquainted." And in that instant of holding the wriggling kid, she can laugh at the idea of walking east, too.

Next week, maybe, they will give Mary a few pounds of potato meal and some dried milk and cabbage, from the surplus stores. The only trouble is, she can't eat anything they give her. "They told me not to eat any starches, at the hospital," she says; and the government is handing out mostly rice and potatoes. She can't eat cabbage, either. She's supposed to drink a quart of milk a day. I mentioned her symptoms to a doctor, later, and he said cheerfully that she could eat meats, fish, eggs. Oh, there were plenty of foods she could eat.

Right now all Mary Taglieri has for herself and the kids is two quarts of milk a day delivered by the International Labor Defense.

It was bad of her young husband to die and leave her in such a fix; all that can be said for him is that he wasn't planning on dying. He had a fine job as first-helper in Republic Steel. He was one of the ten men the Chicago cops shot dead, just a year ago Memorial Day, when they tried to picket Republic.

I passed the relief station, when I had left Tony Taglieri's family. There were "closed" signs on the doors. Three cops were standing guard.

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Spain

Four Poems

Joseph Hirsch

Catalonia

Proud that so long ago
Sires of mine,
Under the Sierra
Or beside the Sea,
Knew this land's rough wine,
Fruit of the vine,
Dwarf-palm and pomegranate
And the olive tree—

The Goth, the Frank, the Moor.
Could these constrain
Her casual laughing mind,
The passion of her?
Land of fierce liberty,
O Soul of Spain,
As flame you arise again
From the days that were!

A burning torch this day,
A terrible brand,
Held high above the oppressed,
The foully betrayed—
You are the heart in my breast,
And my true land,
And like a sword to my hand
Is your name made.

Again they shall not pass,
They shall make no stay,
Were they the fiends of Hell,
Who are dupe and knave.
They shall lie as the mown grass,
Like the snow they shall shrivel away,
And the high Sierra laugh
For love of the brave.

Though they blacken the sky with planes,
You will have no yoke;
Though they leave not stone on stone,
And the grieving shell
End with its blast of death
And stifling smoke—
Wave after wave you will rise
And return them to Hell.

Thus, when Time forgives,
And the legend is told
Of the incredible brave
When the Lost was Won—
As it shall surely be,
As it was of old—
Will shine this land, if he lives
Seen of my son.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

Convoy

Snow went into the steaming radiators
we pushed a sick camion into the drifts
ate snow off our backs, then moved on

We pushed our Diamond-T's through sheep
that choked a village street, made
tow-ropes of bomb-torn telegraph lines

Sullen iron gray rollers of shrapnel
hissed and fell on the beach-like road
frozen mud filled the bomb-holes, we
moved on

Planes stopped us: chewing-gum, soap
string and barbed wire went into the engines
chofers wiped glue out of their eyes and
drove off

Fast as ants we stripped the carcass
of a fallen car of tires bolts wire
and parts until only frame-bones were
left:

Fought off the back of roaring camions
war wove through the mountains of Teruel
fast as quicksilver red as flame white as
death

Leaving a trail of cigarette butts
brandy bottles and the stink of hot oil
and frozen sweat in the deep tire tracks

With the echo of our songs rocketing
like rifle-shots inside the ice walls
of the Sierra Gudár, we moved up and
on.

JAMES NEUGASS.

You Also Die

You also die
Who have no more to give than pity.
So is the heart beleaguered.

Yours is the shattered city,
The sagging roof,
The gaping doors,
The black cadaver,
The torn flesh
Yours.

You build a barricade against yourself
And you yourself are slain
Who think that pity is enough.
The rain of bombs three thousand miles away
Is nearer than you think.
They burst within the sockets of your skull.

What's Abyssinia to you?
And what, Madrid? Shanghai?
Headlines with the morning coffee
And milk delivered daily,
A conversation piece,
A thought.

The fascist butchers,
Hangmen of the world,
Shrapnel mouthed,
Creep over the earth like poison gas,
The bayonet
Swings to the four points of the compass.

Peace is indivisible.

You are he who lies
On the naked field
With staring eyes,
You are the thing
Face downward in the mud,
(Give more than pity!)
You are the pool of blood.
While the black buzzards
Hang over Madrid's blue sky,
Sharpen your pity to an edge
Or you also die.

LEWIS ALLAN.

Ode to Spring

Since Barcelona . . .

I am frightened
by noises in the sky:
once symmetrical plane
has lost its dignity.

Gulls remind me too
of death: their claws
vertical in sunlight
give a bomb-illusion.

The liner's smokestack
on horizon has lost
innocence of mural:
angle suggests cannon.

The earth is beautiful.
Destroyers have left upon it
their vast historic ruin:
The wheat harvest is dead
Girls will be forced at night
Statues will be torn down
Poets murdered as they recite. . . .

O my love my Spring
what morning death
Awaits us as we wake!
It is a dangerous year for sleeping. . . .

NORMAN ROSTEN.

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READERS' FORUM

Following are nine more answers to the article "Why I Am Not an Active Communist," in the May 17 issue. Inasmuch as the article was anonymous, the answers also will be anonymous. Other answers will appear next week.—THE EDITORS.

From a Former "Parlor Sympathizer"

TO THE NEW MASSES:

FOR four years I had been what is labeled "parlor sympathizer." I gave from the pocket book, attended the various affairs. Suddenly I realized this was a very unsatisfactory arrangement. I had my family to consider. We are a very closely knit family. I'm what is called the "brat." And even though I know how stupidly reactionary they are, sometimes even vicious pro-fascists, I'm fond of them and can't hurt them. My husband was all for it, even though he knew only too well that it might involve a family situation. But he, too, knew there is so very much to do and so little time to do it. . . . And so I would say that it is unwise for you to think that it makes no particular difference whether you join the battle. It emphatically does; anyone feeling the way you do, intellectually accepting Communist ideology, will find this out upon joining the party. There is so much to do, and our forces must grow and grow.

Dangerous Optimism

TO THE NEW MASSES:

HE is unwilling to leave his children with a nurse, yet he is ready to surrender them up, without lifting a finger, to the barbaric fury of fascism. And how much worse for him when his children say, "You saw it coming and did nothing to save us." His article is frightening because it demonstrates a terrible criminal optimism—a feeling that somehow he will escape the storm and the battle with nothing worse than a guilty conscience. It's the sort of optimism that will stir only when it can see the whites of the (enemy's) eyes, and then it will surely be too late.

Coming from a soft and easy life myself, I can understand his reluctance to relinquish the drifting, leisurely life without compulsions, to do organized work within a disciplined party. It is, of course, harder for such people. However, he exaggerates the compulsions and the discipline. He feels that once a party member he will want to give all his free time to the party. Surely this is sophistry. Since he doesn't want to give all his free time, he now gives no time at all. He is also afraid of being branded as a Red and thus losing his effectiveness within his middle-class circles.

Join a Mass Organization

TO THE NEW MASSES:

IT seems to me that in his situation, our friend should find his way into the party in a step-by-step process. The first step would be, I believe, in a mass organization like the American League for Peace and Democracy, or the International Workers Order, or the Labor Party. In such organizations, he can assume responsibility in a proportion compatible with his personal situation. His wife could do the same, and their activities could be so divided as to enable each of them to share the task of caring for the children on those nights where they are engaged in meetings. . . . There is no sense in minimizing the responsibilities and activities which attend membership in our party. Only those people should join the party who can attend the unit or branch meetings and participate in their proper mass organizations and the fractions in them. Even this minimum program appears to be too much for our friend. That is why I recommend membership in a mass organization as the first step. Other steps can be taken according to the particular development of circumstances.

From a Doctor

TO THE NEW MASSES:

IT [the article] is as foreign to me as if I, a physician, were to have studied for four years in a medical school, and then were to refuse to see any patients. Would this not appear, to say the least, pointless? . . . Primary and fundamental in this world is life itself. Cogitation has its place, but only as a guide to action. It is important, certainly, but only as it is important to think before you act. Man has never projected any concept which proposes to think—and then not act! The theory of Marxism, as with the theory of medicine, is intended as a weapon—and weapons are designed primarily for use.

Home Work

TO THE NEW MASSES:

IF the writer of the article is, as he himself says, "almost incessantly laboring under the burden of an imaginary or real guilt" at his lack of active participation in constructive work, it must to some extent cancel out the "contentment" which his present life affords him! Again, he should not underestimate the importance of his own potential contribution toward protecting what he regards as so desirable. If he doesn't fight for it now, it may not be his to enjoy much longer. Lastly, he should rid himself of the idea that the Communist Party is an arbitrary organization which sends its members out to take part in "revolutionary action" regardless of their tastes, aptitudes, or personal circumstances.

Far from trying to antagonize or cripple him by giving him work for which he has neither the time nor the energy, the party would try to stimulate him to work in which his home might play a leading part. For instance, here are two people, by his own admission, who have done considerable reading and talking about current events and problems. Their party assignment might well be conducting one or more weekly study circles in their home, not limited to their own acquaintances, but including party members needing more education or contacts with whom the party organization, through the section education-department, would put them in touch. This is vitally important "revolutionary action" now, when the party is making every effort to increase and broaden its educational work.

"Party Work" Exaggerated

TO THE NEW MASSES:

THE amount of work required of party members is always exaggerated by those not in the party. I have been in the party for six months now, and I am still wondering when I am going to get that heavy load of work I heard so much about before I joined. Work in the party is not work in the ordinary sense of the word; it is something we want very much to do.

Division of Time

TO THE NEW MASSES:

IT is impossible to build a better home without building a better world. Both are equally necessary. Why not divide your time? Surrender two evenings a week to the party. It does not mean breaking up your home. . . . There is much inner party work that can be done by individual comrades at home. Your discussions with your wife would then have a real basis. Planning and working together for a more ideal life for your children and yourselves can only bring you closer together.

Mental Hazard

TO THE NEW MASSES:

AS to your most difficult problem, namely the demands made on party members—it is really only a mental hazard. The Communist Party does not expect children's welfare to be neglected, or homes to be disrupted. . . . With some adjustments, and certainly some sacrifices, you will become something which you are not today: a complete individual, faithful to his ideals. Your every word cries out that you no longer stand aside but that you put your shoulder to the wheel. You and your wife will realize when you begin to participate in the work of the party that your serene and apparently full life was not really complete until you identified yourselves with that stalwart vanguard of the proletariat, the Communist Party, which will lead the world to Socialism.

Individual Values

TO THE NEW MASSES:

IT seems to me that the author of the article has posed a question which can only be answered by reference to individual values. Of course membership in the Communist Party entails the sort of sacrifices he mentions, though not, I feel, to quite the extent that he assumes. If his feeling that our world needs changing is strong enough, he will join the Communist Party and make the sacrifices willingly. The hitch, of course, is in the word "enough." It is virtually impossible for one to determine the degree of a man's conviction, and it is less than fair, in that case, to try to prescribe for him. The *act* of joining, I should say, is the only adequate test of conviction, and is, at the time, our only adequate criterion.

Terror in Oklahoma

TO THE NEW MASSES:

FOR the past two months we have been waging a struggle to reestablish the rights of free speech and free assembly in Claremore, Okla.

Two active members of our local Workers Alliance were beaten up. A campaign against us began in the local press, characterized by the wildest sort of Red-baiting. The chief of police, a drunkard, threatened to kill two of us. Our lawyer was manhandled by the chief. The city council purchased $91 worth of tear-gas bombs. The American Legion leadership and additional hoodlums were deputized, armed with guns and clubs, and our planned meetings at the city hall were forcibly prevented.

That the clique in power is fascist is clearly indicated by a recent editorial in the local paper concerning Mayor Hague's preparations to prevent Congressmen Bernard and O'Connell from speaking in Jersey City. In praise of Hague, they wrote: "We are sorry that the gentlemen failed to reach Jersey City. In this crowd of fifty thousand red-blooded Americans, there must have been a few who had no scruples against obliterating vipers. . . . To the Americans of Jersey City, our hats are off."

We have taken action through the courts, in addition to mass struggle against these fascists. Our application for an injunction is pending. We are planning a libel suit against the paper, and several assault actions against the chief of police and others.

We are prevented from going ahead by our lack of finances. We need monetary help badly. Contributions should be sent to the Oklahoma Defense Fund, care of NEW MASSES.

Tulsa, Okla.

ROBERT WOOD.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Dickens' Indictment of Victorian Society

CHARLES DICKENS: THE PROGRESS OF A RADICAL, *by T. A. Jackson. International Publishers. $1.75.*

TO certain academic critics—e.g., George Saintsbury—Dickens' concern with social problems was a deplorable blemish on his work. Forster, in the official biography, made as little as he could of the novelist's powerful discontent with society. Walter Crotch and G. K. Chesterton suggested that he was concerned only with specific evils, not with the social structure. Even George Gissing, who said some very sensible things, reduced Dickens' social views to Christian charity. It has remained for T. A. Jackson not only to remind us that Dickens was a Radical in the political sense but also to prove that his social radicalism was far-reaching and persistent.

Unfortunately, Mr. Jackson has not presented his thesis in the most persuasive form, for he has adopted an expository method that results in repetition and confusion. He devotes his first one hundred pages to what he calls "Dickens' Development in General," setting forth Dickens' major ideas in their relation to the time in which he lived, and illustrating the various points from the various novels. In the next section, "Dickens' Work Considered in Detail," he reviews all the novels in chronological order, giving long and rather confusing outlines of each, and necessarily duplicating to a considerable extent what he has previously said. And his concluding section, "Dickens' Outlook as a Whole," goes over much the same ground.

If the result is not altogether easy reading, the conclusions are nonetheless important. Everyone knows that Dickens considered himself a Radical. The Radicals wanted to push on, after the Reform Bill of 1832, to the further extension of the suffrage and the establishment of their ideal of democracy. After 1848, however, the Radicals, as well as the Chartists and the Communists, seemed to have been defeated, not only in England but throughout Europe. The triumph of reaction in England went hand in hand with prosperity, for England was so far advanced industrially that the free-trade policy of being the workshop of the world could succeed. Minor reforms were adopted, but the democratic drive petered out.

In the years after the Great Exhibition of 1851 most of the Radicals lapsed into lukewarm liberalism, and it is usually held that Dickens was one of them. Jackson shows that this is not true. He divides Dickens' work into three periods: before 1842, between 1842 and 1850, after 1850. In the first period, he maintains, Dickens was a typical petty-bourgeois Radical—optimistic, confident of accomplishing certain specific reforms as steps to true democracy, opposed to the physical-force Chartists, inclined to rely on the benevolence of employers rather than on the action of the working class. The second period—which I think Mr. Jackson is less successful in characterizing—marked a kind of transition, the loss of facile optimism. The last period exhibited distress over the triumph of reaction, combined with intense hatred of the reactionaries. Though he did not see how change was to be accomplished, Dickens' sense of the need for change, according to Jackson, was so strong that "with a little outside aid it might easily have emerged as positive Socialism or Communism."

Most critics would agree with what Jackson says about the novels Dickens wrote before 1850, but they would quarrel with his comments on the third period. The novels of this period are *Bleak House, Hard Times, Little Dorrit, A Tale of Two Cities, Great Expectations,* and *Our Mutual Friend. Bleak House,* Mr. Jackson points out, is an attack not only on the law but also on vested interests in general. *Hard Times* satirizes and denounces the Manchester school of economics. *Little Dorrit* describes the injustices of society—the suffering of the poor and the success of the callous rich. *A Tale of Two Cities,* by showing how injustice once led to revolution, is a warning to the ruling classes. *Great Expectations* and *Our Mutual Friend* exhibit the folly and stupidity of the Victorian bourgeoisie.

Hostile critics would, I am afraid, have some basis for maintaining that, in treating these novels, Jackson has exaggerated Dickens' revolutionary tendencies, for he overlooks some passages that do not fit his thesis. For example, in speaking of *Hard Times,* perhaps Dickens' most explicit novel, he dismisses the treatment of the union organizer as a kind of inexplicable lapse. But it is an integral part of the conception of the book. Note the chapter in which Stephen, who has been ostracized by the workmen because he will not join the union, talks with Bounderby, his employer. Bounderby criticizes the organizer, and Stephen replies: "I'm as sorry as you, sir, when the people's leaders is bad. They take such as offers. Haply, 'tis not the smallest of their misfortunes when they can get no better." And Stephen ends the interview by urging that employers take an intelligent interest in their workmen.

John Heliker

Jackson admits that Dickens had earlier placed his faith in employers of good will, but insists that he outgrew this attitude after 1842. It seems to me clear that he never grew beyond it. In *A Tale of Two Cities* Dickens is arguing, as Carlyle argued in *The French Revolution,* that the revolution was a punishment visited upon the upper classes because of their failure to serve the interests of the masses. Indeed, I see no evidence that Dickens ever outgrew Carlyle's influence. He never emphasized the purely reactionary side of Carlyle's doctrines, as Carlyle himself came to do, and he remained closer to the masses of the people, but he believed to the end that salvation must come from the top down.

Yet, for all this, there is a fundamental truth in Jackson's study. He says at the end: "It is no doubt true that Dickens never fully realized the cumulative force of his own indictment of bourgeois society. Hence he did not draw the theoretical conclusions that, to us, seem to have been staring him in the face." My only quarrel with Jackson is that he sometimes attributes those "theoretical conclusions" to Dickens when he has no basis for doing so. But the indictment of bourgeois society is there, and it is very much to Jackson's credit that he has given a clearer account of it than we have ever had before. That indictment has been obscured by the critics, but, as Jackson says, the people have not failed to recognize Dickens as their spokesman.

One merit of the book is that Jackson has kept his attention sharply focused on Dickens' novels, which he has obviously read and reread with understanding and affection. He says all that needs to be said about the social background, but he never forgets that Dickens is his theme. Perhaps the literary background deserved more attention, but a more detailed discussion of such writers as Carlyle, Ruskin, Mrs. Gaskell, and Kingsley would not have altered Jackson's conclusions. Other authors began, as Dickens did, with warm humanitarian ideals, but Dickens clung to them all his life, and, as Jackson makes clear, he could not be true to them without in some measure outgrowing them. In his feeling about con-

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Once a WYFIP always a hounder, that's our motto, so I hope you're all keeping close on the heels of the new subscribers you won for NM during the Big Drive. Soon comes the fifteenth week for some of them, and it won't hurt any of us if you prod them gently into sending along a year's renewal before there's any gap.

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temporary society Dickens came amazingly close to being a revolutionist, and it is Jackson's distinction that he has established this point once and for all.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

A French Materialist and His Censor

DIDEROT, INTERPRETER OF NATURE: *Selected writings translated by Jean Stewart and Jonathan Kemp. International Publishers. $2.50.*

MALESHERBES, *by John M. S. Allison. Yale University Press. $2.50.*

"DIDEROT'S versatility," says Harold Laski, "is such that any picture of its achievement would end only at the boundaries of knowledge." There are indeed few departments of knowledge which he did not touch upon, despite the vast amount of time he was forced to waste on hack-work. Even this necessarily small sample selected from the twenty-volume *Oeuvres* is bound to amaze not only by the wealth of reference to mathematics, music, biology, law, and logic, but by the assurance and authority of the man's attainments as well. Here are grace and brilliance but no superficiality: every page breathes the exciting atmosphere, not unlike our own, of important, crucial times veering quickly toward a new society.

But the publisher has been less interested, perhaps, in supplying American readers with a representative group of the most delightful philosophical dialogues written, than in making plain why Marx thought so highly of Diderot and in demonstrating why Lenin should have been moved to list Diderot as one of the four great materialists—the others being Feuerbach, Marx, and Engels. Diderot not only fought free of what Lenin called the "metaphysico-theological nonsense" of Berkeleyan idealism—"the offspring of blindness itself"; but alone of all the French *philosophes* did he escape mere "mechanical" materialism in philosophy and science. Lenin finds that he "came very close to the view of contemporary realism."

One understands from a reading of the spirited *Rameau's Nephew* why Marx considered it a "masterpiece from beginning to end," and one is glad to have the whole of that brilliant dialogue from which Lenin made an extensive quotation to combat his contemporary idealists—the *Conversation between D'Alembert and Diderot,* as well as its remarkable sequel, *D'Alembert's Dream.* Everywhere Diderot seems on the point of ascending in his materialism to the dialectical approach; sometimes, as in *Rameau's Nephew,* he hits it. Everywhere he seems about to formulate the position of dialectical materialism—as, for instance, in the *Conversation,* when he says, "Everything is connected in nature, and if you imagine a new phenomenon or bring back a moment of the past, you are creating a new world." Behind that observation is an under-

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standing of the eternal movement of things, their contradictions being resolved to give birth to new opposites.

His early writings mark a long struggle that drove him from Catholicism, through a general theism to deism, and at last to atheism. Once he had settled for himself the dependence of what is called "soul" upon bodily processes *(cf.* the *Indiscreet Toys),* he proceeded to elaborate with growing enthusiasm upon the materialism he had adopted. Any hypothesis unsubstantiated by scientific fact and experiment, or contradictory to reasoning based on them, he discarded. "One may compare ideas which have no foundation in nature, to those forests of the North whose trees have no roots. It needs only a breath of wind, only a small fact, to overturn a whole forest of trees and ideas." But there is nothing petty in his love of the fact: "The absolute independence of a single fact is incompatible with the idea of the whole; and without the idea of the whole, no more philosophy." *(Interpretation of Nature.)*

Diderot cultivated his taste for biology, and actually attempted to state *The Elements of Biology.* It is, indeed, in the field of natural science that his steps are boldest; it is in this kind of speculation that he must be called a dialectical materialist. Confidently he cracks the age-old nut of the metaphysicians: "If you're worried by the question 'Which came first, the hen or the egg?' it is because you suppose that animals were originally the same as they are now. What madness! We can no more tell what they were originally than what they will become. The tiny worm, wriggling in the mud, may be in the process of developing into a large animal; the huge animal, that terrifies us by its size, is perhaps on the way to becoming a worm, is perhaps a particular and transient product of this planet."

Thus he toys constantly with evolutionary theory, an important precursor of Darwin and Lamarck. *D'Alembert's Dream* is concerned chiefly with evolutionary theory and the endless flux within the oneness of nature.

Not less amazing are his occasional flashes of insight into a newer society than his class, the bourgeoisie, was fighting for. The best of his contemporaries, Voltaire, Helvetius, D'Holbach, and the rest, had little hope for the emerging proletarian, and apparently less interest in him. Diderot himself, elsewhere, stigmatized the common man as "the most foolish and wicked of all men." But here we find him far in advance of his time in protesting the capitalist notion "that a free, thinking, sentient being can be the property of a being like himself." In the same work *(Supplement to Bougainville)* he even predicates the necessity of the state's assuring a living to all its citizens, and declares that the more numerous a family the more money should be allotted it.

This rich selection from Diderot should whet the appetite of all to whom the evolution of dialectical materialism is a concern. And perhaps someone will be moved to make what will obviously be a rewarding study of

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The volume shows us little of that Diderot whom the world knows best, the editor of the *Encyclopedia*. The reason, doubtless, for the omission is that in that monumental endeavor, a life-work though it was, Diderot was not free to express himself fully. Professor Allison has written an engagingly contrived biography of the censor under whose jurisdiction Diderot had to labor, Lamoignon de Malesherbes. In the censorship of Malesherbes, Diderot was fortunate; for cautious though Malesherbes was, he was sympathetic to the iconoclasts and was, with reason, regarded by them as a friend. The job was risky, but Malesherbes undertook the task of acting as a buffer between the revolutionary *philosophes* and the Jesuit-Royalist cliques anxious to hound the thinkers into jail. Professor Allison gives a full account of Malesherbes' transactions with the "Reds" of the day (now regarded as prophets), and his long, patient assistance to the difficult Rousseau is related at length.

Malesherbes, himself a landowner, was anxious for reform but was unwilling to think beyond a limited monarchy, like England's. He played a conspicuous role in the early days of the revolution, but clung to his reverence for Louis XVI. In the end he was the only man who dared act as directing counsel for the King at his trial. Already old, he knew the dangers involved in his daily conferences with the deposed monarch in his cell. It was an office that inevitably led him, too, to the guillotine.

This unaffected study, despite some lapses in the writing (e.g., "A rigid puritanism, and a cold, almost classic reserve *animated* the circle to which his family belonged") makes an excellent supplement to the volume on Diderot and moreover provides some interesting sidelights to the work of the *philosophes*. The *Diderot* itself has a brief but informative introduction by Jonathan Kemp.

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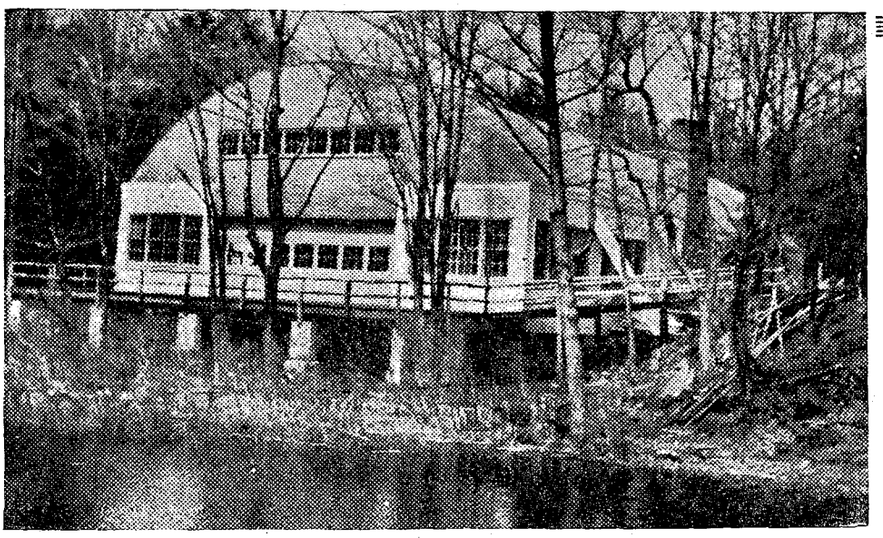

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Avoidance of thought may be advisable if one is a member of the owning classes, but *Strumpet Wind* tells what happens to a working girl whose intelligence is unequal to life's complications. This is a bare novel, in the reportorial tradition; Sarah escapes from a poverty-stricken home, works as a waitress in a Texas town, is seduced and abandoned by a cheap, vulgar youth. She answers an advertisement in a matrimonial paper and goes to California to marry a farmer she has never seen. He turns out to be a weak, dour, psychopathic man; the marriage is unconsummated; the louring and deadening atmosphere weaves out the final violence. Sarah is a woman with a direct, passionate need for life, an honest and true person, who meets only warped and feeble men. She is brought quite vividly alive in these pages and the portraits of the lunch room, the rotting farm, the decayed mining country of California are clear and luminous. But Sarah's tragedy is a matter of chance, of personal misfortune, having none of the social inevitability which might have made it significant. It is quite true that countless apparently fortuitous tragedies take place all around us, but they are not in themselves material for art. None of these writers has learned that art is not a mirror, however true or shining or embellished, but an attempt to give values to life.

MARJORIE BRACE.

Brief Reviews

FURTHER, *by Amelie Posse-Brázdová. E. P. Dutton & Co. $3.50.*

"Dear Diary" would have made a more fitting title for this jumble of post-war memories, travelogue, and soul-searching by Mme. Brázdová.

As a political Baedeker for Central Europe directly after the war, and for Italy on the threshold of fascism, it has nothing new to say. But as a portrait of a sentimental woman who dabbles in art, music, and peasant pottery, and who finally winds up in oriental mysticism it is sometimes amusing.

Nero fiddled while Rome burned, but Amelie lay in bed absorbing Yogi philosophy while Mussolini marched on the eternal city.

ROBERT GOLDSMITH.

COMING FROM THE FAIR, *by Norah Hoult. Covici, Friede. $2.50.*

Since the emphasis of Miss Hoult's latest novel is primarily regional, it is unfortunate that her particular region—the Dublin of the twentieth century—has been so often handled before by writers of greater insight and magnitude. The present volume inevitably evokes comparison with the unforgettable Dublin of James Joyce; and Miss Hoult herself seems to insist on the comparison, for a few of Joyce's own characters reappear in her pages. Buck Mulligan, blithe as ever, caroms through the book in his destined role as parodist *par excellence;* W. B. Yeats, A. E., Starkey, the Abbey Theatre, and even Joyce himself are mentioned obliquely in conversation. Aside from this relationship of milieu, however, Miss Hoult nowhere approaches that objective mastery of image and cadence which illuminates Joyce's *Dubliners.* Her novel is competent and sincere but laborious as well—employing, as it does, all the clichés of nineteenth-century realism set forth in unimaginative prose.

JOSEPH FRANK.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Documentary of Tennessee Life

FRONTIER FILMS has released its long-awaited picture of life in the Tennessee highlands, called *People of the Cumberland.* Pare Lorenz' *Plow That Broke the Plains* told the economic story of the Western grasslands; *The River* followed eastward with a picture of life in the Mississippi basin; and now Frontier opens another volume of cinematic regionalism with a land still farther east. American documentaries, of which these three are the best, have occupied themselves mainly with rural life, getting down to earth, not yet setting their tripods in the city. Frontier is at work on a picture about civil liberties, which will naturally involve urban industrial life, but, until then, the non-fiction film in America stands on its stirring treatment of agricultural areas.

Erskine Caldwell wrote the narrative for *People of the Cumberland,* an essay about the pure English stock emerging from the colonial era two hundred years late. They are standing on their feet and organizing, with the reawakened spirit of their ancestors, in the Appalachian blue grass. The film tells about organization in textiles and mines and the work of the Highlander Folk School, that brave stockade of progress in the wilderness, where labor missionaries guide the renaissance of highland culture.

The neanderthal boss-class in these hills has enforced a hideous manner of life. There are company towns in the coal fields like concentration camps in the depth of virgin forest, where to be a union organizer is more dangerous than was scouting in the Dark and Bloody Grounds.

Frontier handles the exciting story of a whole land and its people with the fine sense of film we expect from its cameramen and directors. The musical score by Alex North compares with Virgil Thomson's sound track for *The River* and the camera work by Ralph Steiner is clean and composed, using still shots in the opening sequences to set the scene. Frontier is the nuclear group for the making of great labor films. They have begun handsomely with an inexpensive form, the documentary, and have endowed it with most of the interest Hollywood gets into expensive fictions.

The film was directed by Robert Stebbins and Eugene Hill, who have tied all the aspects of their subject into an impressive unity. *People of the Cumberland* will open at the Cameo where it should be received with pride by the labor movement.

The good old pictures return like the ghost of last Christmas to haunt Hollywood. The best movie of the week is four years old. *It Happened One Night* is one of a series of revivals with which Hollywood hopes to keep the theaters open until something is done about the rubbish being ground off in the West today.

Frank Capra's picture of the nasty rich girl who runs smack into American life on a bus ride from Miami to New York is as fresh as it was in the second year of the New Deal. An uncommonly honest director, with a brilliant script by Robert Riskin, took a long look over the high walls around Hollywood and brought to the screen incidents with which the eighty millions who go to the movies could identify themselves. The thrill of *It Happened One Night* is not vicarious—it is a glad cry of recognition for everyone who has heard bus tires buzzing on a wet road or exchanged autobiographies with the stranger in the next seat. Nor is the beauty of the picture a matter of plot. The acidulous reporter who sasses his boss, gets drunk, and wins the rich girl by his contempt, is a stock item in Hollywood. What we saw here for the first time so expertly done were the details: the line-up for the outdoor shower in a tourist camp, the freight train crossing in front of a love-smitten reporter's flivver and the engineer, brakeman, and box-car passengers waving happily to him. We saw the insides of real tourist cabins, people in the bus skylarking in the night in a rare moment of family feeling, even the man whispering to a station attendant and getting pantomime directions to the privy.

They knew Capra had a good picture—he and the stars got Academy awards and Columbia Pictures had a huge money-maker. Capra and Riskin made next *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town,* and reiterated their regard for the facts of life.

Everyone would like to see more like *It Happened One Night,* but the successors of the masterpiece were progressively weaker copies without the feeling and the direct references of the original. Well, as Sam Goldwyn says, the public is on strike against bad pictures, and what hurts worst, they are on strike against Sam Goldwyn's bad pictures. Reviving old hits is a pretty poor way of solving the attendance problem. Throwing Will Hays overboard and turning cameras into the streets and fields is my home remedy for what ails the movie industry.

John Ericsson, Victor of Hampton Roads is the name of a curious Swedish picture about the American Civil War, now playing at the Fifth Avenue Playhouse. Ericsson was the inventor of the armor-plated gunboat, *Monitor,* which broke Southern sea power in the famous duel with the Confederate floating fortress, *Merrimac,* at Hampton Roads. The picture is a respectful, literal, and sluggish business, interesting because it is the first European film about American history.

Yellow Jack at the Capitol is a reasonable facsimile of Sidney Howard's play of the fight against yellow fever during the construction of the Panama Canal. Robert Montgomery gets out of his Brooks Brothers grouse jacket, away from such stinkers as *The First Hundred Years,* to approximate his brilliant accomplishment in *Night Must Fall.* There has been a shift in emphasis from the play which was about an *event* to a personal drama proper for the stature of movie stars. The damage is slight considering the expert and significant production given to the work by MGM.

Paul de Kruif's documentation for the original Howard play is a case study of the need for governmental solution of public-health problems. Not only yellow fever but all of the ill health of the American environment could be as well disposed of by the technique used forty years ago. Movies like

Recently Recommended Plays

Prologue to Glory (Maxine Elliott, N. Y.). Federal Theatre production of E. P. Conkle's play about Lincoln's early life, the affair with Ann Rutledge, and his first steps away from the life of the New Salem country store.

Plant in the Sun (Bayes, N. Y.). Ben Bengal's play of uncommon appeal and charm, combining strike fervor with juvenile tenderness and roughneck comedy. On the same program is Philip Stevenson's *Transit.*

One-third of a Nation (Adelphi, N. Y.). The current issue of The Living Newspaper, headlining the lack of adequate housing for President Roosevelt's 33 1-3 percent, and emphasizing the need for action. Thoroughly documented, witty, and admirably produced.

Recently Recommended Movies

The Fight for Peace. Pulls no punches in telling America how fascism makes war. Fails to answer the question it poses, but is, nevertheless, a powerful indictment of aggression.

The Adventures of Robin Hood. A beautiful screen restoration of the old legend of the British outlaw who robbed the rich to give to the poor. The cast, headed by Errol Flynn as Robin Hood, is excellent.

Test Pilot. Spencer Tracy, Clark Gable, and Myrna Loy in an exciting melodrama of stunts in the air and drinks on the ground with notable montage work by Slavko Vorkapitch in the air scenes.

There's Always a Woman. A variation on *The Thin Man* sort of thing. In it are Melvyn Douglas, Mary Astor, and Joan Blondell, who begins to look like our best comedienne.

Lonely White Sail. Taken from Valentin Kataev's novel of the aftermath of the revolt on the armored cruiser, *Potemkin.* A fine and stirring Soviet film.

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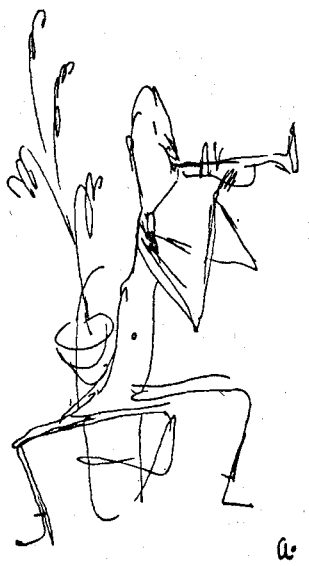
Yellow Jack serve to bring these facts to the public and in a vastly entertaining way.

JAMES DUGAN.

Political Night Life

AT Chez Firehouse in New York's night-club area, the Theatre Arts Committee has set up its light artillery to barrage the enemy with songs, gags, dances, and sketches. Cabaret TAC is what they call their political potpourri, deriving its name from the initials of the sponsoring committee, composed of a large number of anti-fascist theater workers: dramatists, actors, designers, dancers, musicians, critics, managers, producers, call-boys. For more than a year the Theatre Arts Committee has been running rallies and parties to aid loyalist Spain and China, and recently its members have branched out to build radio programs and prepare dance, film, and marionette productions through which they may express their convictions creatively.

Hiram Sherman, the priceless Firk of *Shoemaker's Holiday,* mc'd the show the night we saw it. Eleven numbers made up the two-hour program. We rate highest the group of songs sung by Earl Robinson, Michael Loring, and Leif Ericson. The "Joe Hill" and "Abe Lincoln" songs, written by Robinson and Al Hayes, are becoming favorites in the American workers' songbag. Emanuel Eisenberg's "Mittens," a burlesque on the Living Newspaper technique, was a neat *reductio ad absurdum,* hilariously received. Lotta Goslar's grotesque dances, seen in last year's *Peppermill Revue,* have proved themselves sure-fire with any audience. The ILGWU players came around after their night's work at Labor Stage to do the "One Big Union" number from *Pins and Needles.* Other skits and dances satirized a few of the many reactionary columnists, *the* Hague, the Warner Bros., Mussolini, and J'aime Berlin (credit Belfrage), the barrel-clad taxpayer, and other notables and nonentities. An anti-fascist schnitzelbank to which the audience gave all it had made a lusty ending. The



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sketches under review were a bit too gentle and polite. A little more gouging and a few rabbit punches wouldn't hurt *us,* and who cares about the victims?

Cabaret TAC has several functions. It raises money for Spain and China; it spreads progressive ideas; it stimulates artists to produce. Writers, especially the younger ones, have long wanted to try their hand at the kind of thing TAC does, but they have been held back by lack of an outlet. Since TAC's first night, there has been a regular flow of sketches and songs to the committee's offices. Performers who did not have the chance to express their progressive beliefs through their own medium are now offered that chance. And TAC benefits by having more finished and sharply pointed material to choose from.

Certain weaknesses exist in the TAC idea. The admission is too high (with the food and drink extra) and the hour too late. Only the plutocracy, who don't need to get up for work in the morning, can go. This sets a narrow limit to the audience, and TAC deserves better. To remedy this, the sponsors hope to be able to produce a full-length revue in the fall, like *Pins and Needles,* and to put it on every night at a decent hour for a lower price. And, they say, why not continue Cabaret TAC too? There's room for both, we'll raise more money, employ more theater workers, reach more people, and spread more of "the message." Why not? say we all.

MILTON MELTZER.

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Music, dance, and literature did nobly. The quartet played scores from Haydn and Brahms competently, Aube Tzerko read Schubert with a good deal of contemporary understanding, there was a good house to provide for the *Dance Herald,* and Martha Graham offered one of the happiest programs of the ending season. No new choreography, but *Frontier,* sensuous dance of the American's love of his plains, is always a fresh note, and *Deep Song,* poignantly expressing America's knowledge of the profound sufferings of the Spanish people fighting for their liberties against the fascist invasion, has an emotional drive that might profitably find its way more frequently into classic contemporary dancing.

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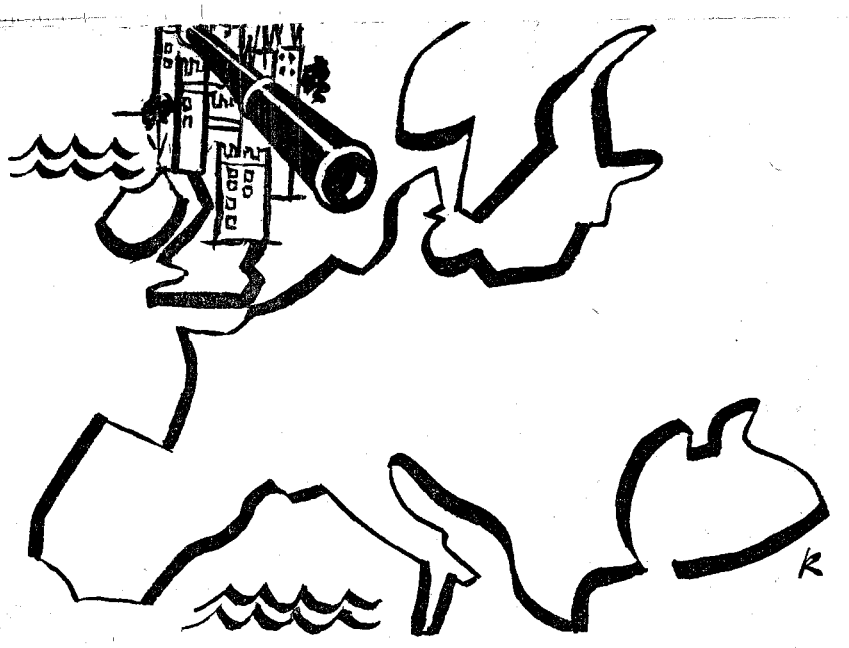
WHAT'S going to happen in EUROPE this summer ? ? ?



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